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THE GOVERNOR'S BOSS




JAMES S. BARCUS

Erratum

The third paragraph from the bottom on page 266 should read as follows:

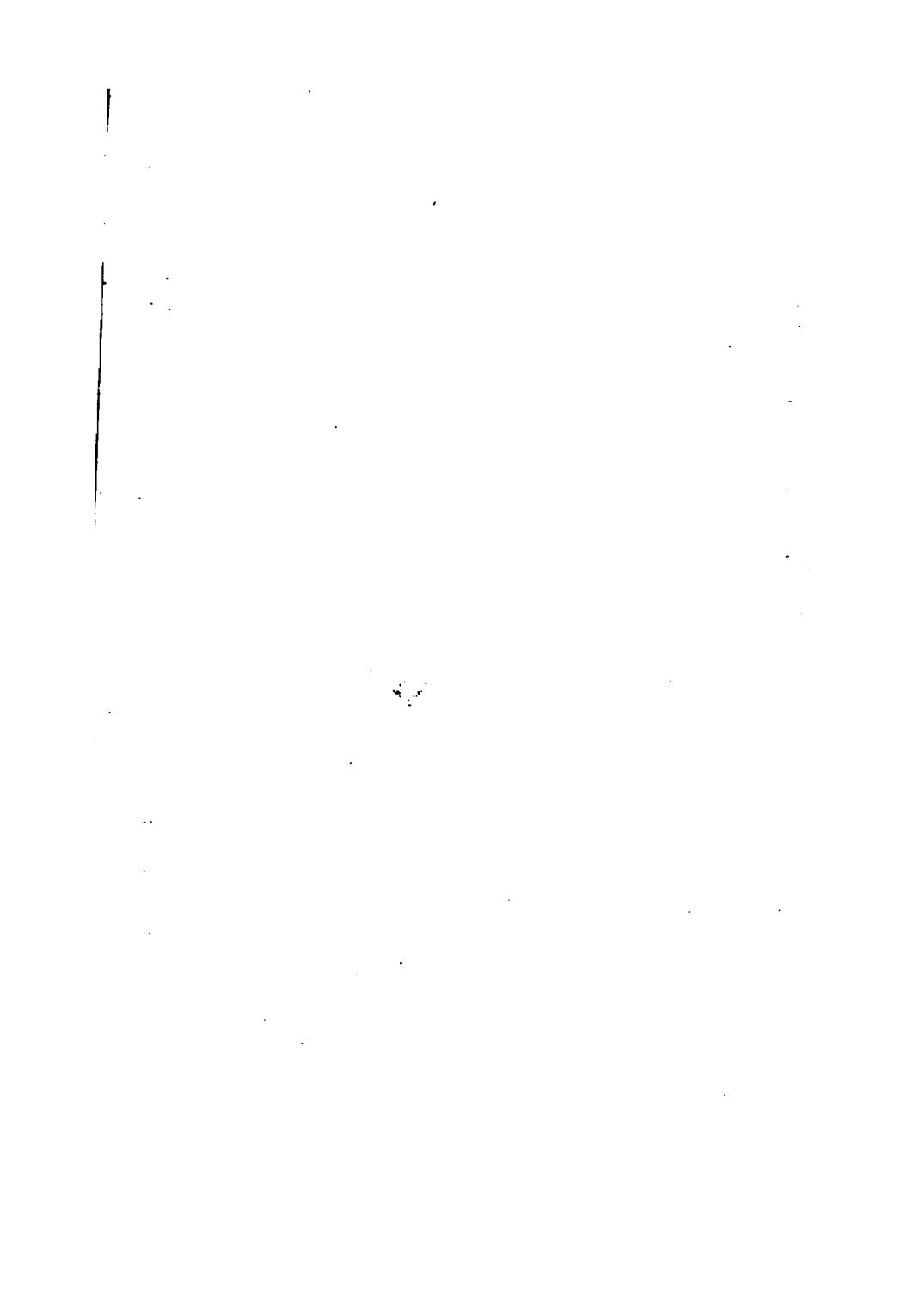
Ruth took from her portmanteau a magnifying glass and continued: "With this you can recognize the faces in the moving picture film."



(Barcus)
NBO

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THE GOVERNOR'S BOSS

By

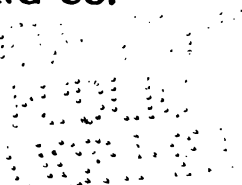
or
JAMES S. BARCUS

Novelized from the Play
"The Governor's Boss"
by the Author.

Frontispiece Illustration by
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CHARACTERS

Jake Upstein (known as Tango) . . . *Gunmen — body-guard of the Boss,*
George Fosdick (known as Tex) . . . *represented as*
Maurice Goldberg (known as Spot) . . . *politicians.*
John Gilmore (called Cap) *Office Boy*
Hiram Talley *The Boss*
A Police Inspector
A Police Captain
Fordyce Manville *The Governor's Secretary*
Archibald Talley *Son of the Boss*
Ruth Woodstock *Ex-telephone Girl*
Hon. Lancelot Shackleton . . . *Newly-elected Governor*
Edith Shackleton *The Governor's Daughter*
Judge Collins *Lawyer and Politician*
Presiding Officer
Assemblyman Weeks
Assemblyman Jones
High Court of Impeachment
Clerk of Court of Impeachment
Court Crier
A Crowd



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girls was due to heredity, education or environment?

Edith was the daughter of a most pious mother and of a father who was proud to a consummate degree. At boarding school she was a favorite. Though she was not deluged with luxury, hardship was a stranger to her. What she wanted found its way to her from indulging parents, but her requirements were not extravagant.

A short time before she was born her father was elected to a modest political office and the success of the anticipated victory consumed him. His body and soul were thrown into the struggle which landed his feet on the first rung of his important political ladder.

The pious mother was so much interested in this, her husband's first political struggle, that she became fairly obsessed with the thought of it. She spent much of her time in kneeling prayer for Lancelot Shackleton's victory; and even while doing her household work her mind was one continual, silent petition to Him who was all-powerful in her eyes, that He grant this wish. Was there a prenatal influence on Edith? Did she have a mental birthmark?

At any rate, for some reason Edith, from childhood, manifested great interest in her

father's public spirit and political ambition; and as she grew into young womanhood her zeal in his behalf made her mind seem thoroughly a part of his. Her father and she were companions—pals. Perhaps he didn't tell her all he knew about the wiles of the game, but he told her enough to keep her interest awakened. In fact, he must tell her, because she asked. And if he withheld the distasteful part, covered up the unsightly picture, let's put it down as a mercy; for he surely would not deceive Edith except for her own good.

It will be found that Edith had a very trustful nature up to a point, and a most gentle nature, for the latter, perhaps, indebted to her mother; but she also had a most ready sense of incredulity. How fully her doubts formed a shield for her father against the shafts of political brigandage, let the reader judge. One thing is conclusive, Edith loved generously and hated without compromise.

Ruth was not so happily born. Her father was a little tradesman without much purpose or capacity. Her mother was a practical little woman, domestic, unassuming and also unambitious.

Ruth's father died when she was fourteen; and his prodigality was well illustrated by the

fact that he spent his small earnings so closely that sometimes he could not even pay promptly the premium on his little life insurance policy. And so it was that, just before his death, he let the policy lapse.

Ruth and her mother were left about penniless; for the mortgage on the little business was merely able to pay itself and comfortably indulge the lawyers for foreclosing it. Ruth was therefore cut off from her meagre educational possibilities at this tender age of fourteen.

Her mother, owing to practice in tidily doing her own clothes and the clothes for Ruth, was able to turn her hand to sewing for the neighbors—thus the wolf did not reach their door.

Ruth, not quite purposeful enough to learn stenography or bookkeeping, or anything like a female profession, sought a position as telephone operator, and after two or three years of assisting and substituting, finally reached the goal of her ambition. And no one has been heard to say that she did not perform her duties with punctuality and dignity. Her graduation from this position, or her degradation from it, as the reader may choose to regard it, must be reserved.

Ruth's mind was bright enough to absorb an education and she was proud enough perhaps to have acquired at least a polish. She did use fairly good language and with her beauty managed to make a good impression even as a little girl. Indeed, she had a lovable character, quite as trusting as Edith in every way, and a little more so in some ways, because she lacked that doubting habit.

She admired important people, loved beautiful things. Perhaps she didn't envy others. But, to put it mildly, she wished she could have beautiful things *like others*—beautiful clothes and jewelry too.

Her contact was little with great people. So if it be true that greatness looks greater when it is far away, Ruth might properly plead distance in extenuation of any fault or weakness. She didn't read enough of history or enough of literature and newspapers to note the fact that sometimes great people dissemble. She worshipped beautiful women, and mentally bowed down to rich men.

Edith and Ruth, given the same opportunity to pass the threshold and enter into the society of the "upper crust," would, even at the age of eighteen, still have the resemblance of twin sisters; and much the same outward form in

society would attract and hold each of them far along the journey. But an analysis of the two would show in advance that one of them would lose her mental poise at the sound of flattery and yield to the temptation of the devil of success, while the other would be pleased with compliments, but would not hear, or else would not heed honey-tongued words that reached the point of blandishment.

Edith relied upon solid merit; and she wore an armor against surprise either in word or act.

Ruth had the everlasting subconscious hope that something extraordinary would happen, that a prince would appear or a fortune fall to her from the skies.

Ruth was superstitious, though she would deny it. She was born on the 22nd day of June. She could not get that out of her mind because she had consulted her astrology and had figured out what it meant. She knew that her governing planet was the moon; and she preferred to wear green and white, her astral colors. The jewel for which she would first look was the onyx or the cat's eye, her birth stones. Her favorite flower was the lily. With her first savings she had a jeweler make a cheap brooch of onyx on which was carved the crab,

her lucky sign. She would deny that astrology influenced her, but just the same, if she had lived in the classic Greek age she would have been a frequent patron of the Delphic oracle.

Edith didn't even take the trouble to ascertain that her birth on March 24th brought her into the sign of Aries of the triplicity of fire.

Both must face trials and tribulations. Both must have their sorrows on the sleeve or in the closet. Both must go through the ordeal of love and disappointment; because Cupid is no respecter of wealth or station; the palace does not insure heart-balm, nor does the hovel bar happiness.

Neither Edith nor Ruth would lay claim to the dignity of king, queen, bishop or rook in the chess game of life. But it has fallen to the lot of each of them, each in her singular way, to be used and played as a pawn in the great political game.

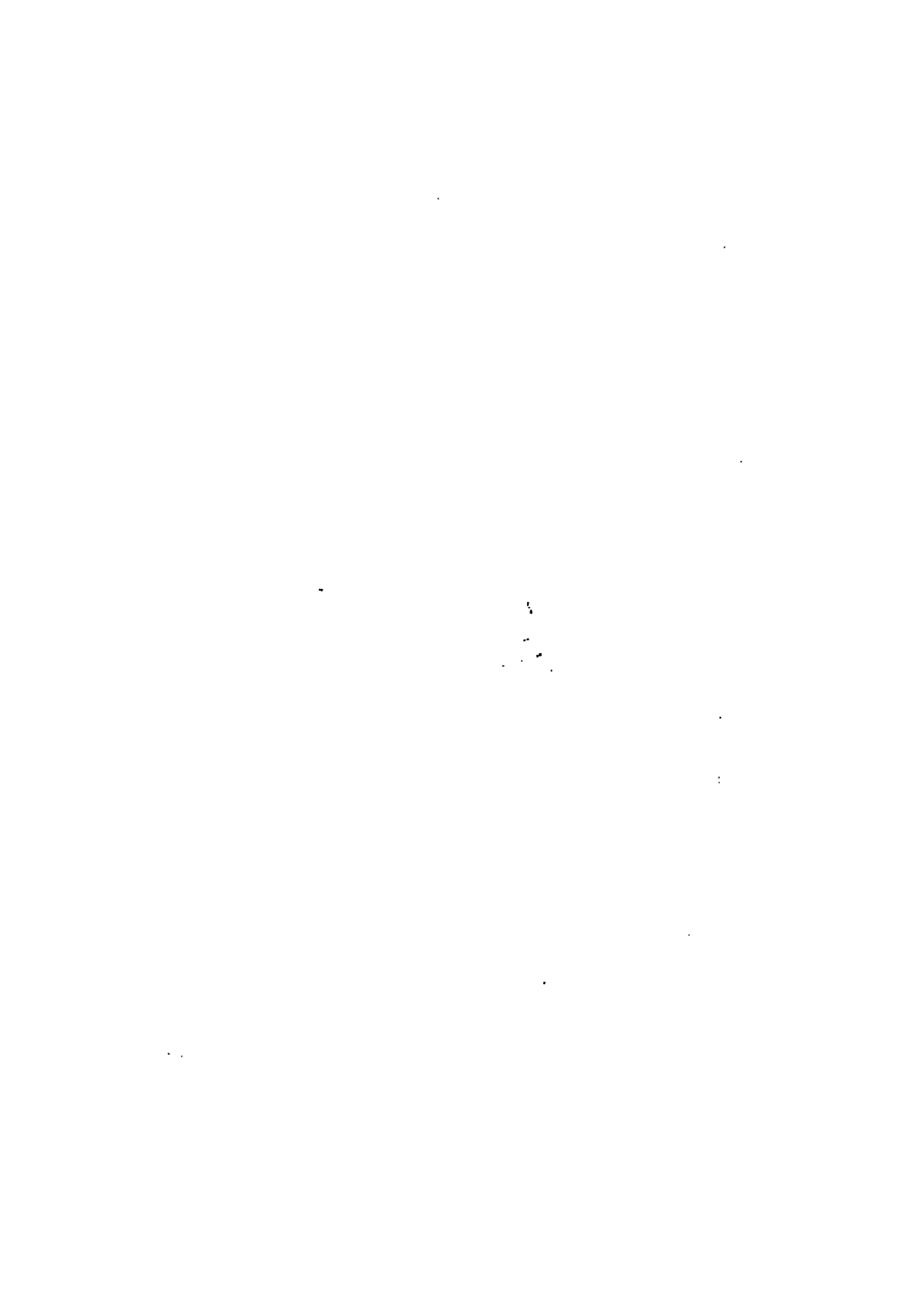
Whether these two girls were guided by heredity, environment or the movement of the stars, we must leave each to her fate.



PART ONE

(I to V inclusive.)

Embraces that portion of the story which took form on election night in and about the apartment of Hiram Talley.



I

THE BODY GUARD.

Being gunmen in the guise of politicians; a symposium giving exposition of principal characters, and betraying the cowardice of gangsters. Also a peep at the office boy.

The furnishings of the spacious main room of the private apartments of the Boss, which he used as an office, in the Cafe de Riche, might have served for the setting of a king in the extravagant days of Louis XIV; and come to think of it they were the setting of a king; for veritably the American boss in politics is a king. He sways his subjects at will, and gathers from them the substance with which to sway them. Among other royal prerogatives he provides himself with a body guard. The body guard of the particular boss in question consisted of three gunmen, who posed as politicians, but who were made to do other service in the great game of American kings.

Two of these gunmen, Tango and Tex,

were awaiting election returns in this spacious room in the cafe. Evidently conditions were not propitious.

Tango stood looking absent-mindedly out of the window onto the main street. Of the three gunmen, Tango was the bravest and Tex the most cowardly—if degrees of courage and cowardliness may be allowed among gunmen.

Tex was sitting by the desk of the Boss, tapping on the desk with a bone paper-knife. Suddenly he arose, shook himself and exercised his arms to warm himself up. Then as if blaming the whole world, but Tango in particular, because Tango was there, he said, "Gee, Tango, this is the coldest 'lection night I ever seen."

Tango, seemingly as a matter of discipline, crossed quickly to Tex, swinging his body in suggestion of the tango dance, and in mock rebuke responded, "If ye'd cut out the booze, ye'd hev more red blood."

"I wonder where Cap is," replied Tex. "Mebby he could stir up the janitor."

Tango said in conciliatory tone, "Better wait till the Boss comes. Mebby he wants to freeze 'em out to-night." Then Tango looked about in quizzical admiration. "He ain't goin' to hev a lot of riff-raff trampin' in *these* quarters."

Tex cheered up, looked the sumptuous room over, and responded gleefully, "Ain't it swell, though? Comin' to the finest restaurant in the city to report."

Spot broke the monotony by a sudden entrance, and at the same time by his looks, renewed the feeling of gloom.

If Tango might be regarded fairly brave and Tex fairly cowardly, Spot would compromise the difference; for he tried to emulate the outward manifestations of bravery on the part of Tango, while often falling into the timid characteristics of Tex. As gunmen go, of course, they were all cowards in a degree. Tex was the first to speak. "Hello, Spot. Any news?"

"No, Tex; ye'd think the wires wuz cut."

Spot and Tex shambled slowly to the center of the room.

"You'se is a nice pair o' guys," said Tango sharply.

Spot pleaded, "Slow up, Tango, slow up. Yer over-speedin'."

Tango persisted: "A feller'd think youse'd never waited fer election returns afore."

Spot continued pessimistically, "Well, I ain't no white-livered guy, but I know when I hit a blind alley."

"Our party's gone to the devil—we're licked," Tex chimed in.

Tango felt it his duty to keep up a show of hope. "Not so fast. *You're* speedin' some, too, but yer speedin' *back'ards*. I tell you, Shackleton's elected."

"Counts don't show it," said Tex. "Burford's twenty votes ahead, and only Union County to hear frum, and that ain't a pipe."

Tango's reply contained reassuring logic. "That depends on who's got charge o' the returns. I tell you it's all right. D'ye think Talley's playin' a game o' casino?"

Spot's imagination prompted the query: "What's to become of us ginks if he loses?"

Tex grew more concerned. "Yes, with a district attorney who's on to all our curves, who's goin' to perpect us if the Boss is down and out?"

"I'm tellin' ye the Boss *ain't* down and out," scolded Tango; and then he looked about stealthfully, and said as he slipped a gun from his pocket and patted it affectionately, "But even if he was—where's yer trainin', ye cowards? Here's a dose of medicine that'll beat all the bosses and all the district attorneys, too. Hain't ye got yours with ye?"

Tex showed fright as he looked about stealth-

fully, and in husky, surprised voice, said: "Not so loud! Not so loud!" and quickly took out his gun. "'Tain't that kind o' fear I'm tremblin' 'bout."

Spot followed suit by taking out his gun. "Fer's artillery's concerned, us ginks could lick a regiment, but when they git ye foul, there's more power in the champagne breath o' the Boss, blowed into the judge's face, than in a carload uv automatics."

"That's it, Tango. Spot's right. What we want is pertection o' the officers, then it's worth while learnin' how to p'int 'em."

Then Tex leveled his gun at the Boss's revolving chair. He instantly let his arm fall, thrust the gun in his pocket, threw up his hands and shrieked, "My God!"

"What's the matter?" asked Tango.

Tex shuddered. "Sh! sh! not so loud!" and tiptoed across to the banquet hall door, parted the portieres, and then dragged himself across to Tango and Spot. "When I p'inted my gun at that chair, it seemed like I seen the Boss settin' there."

Spot was on the verge of catching Tex's hysteria, but as he glanced up at Tango's smile of derision, he resolved to make a show of bravery.

"Tex, yer plumb daffy. If ye git much more nervous, ye ought to begin wearin' a watch strapped to yer wrist, and yer handkerchief up yer sleeve." And as he pocketed his gun, he let out a hollow laugh, which betrayed his sympathy with Tex's fear.

Tex hit back. "Go ahead, old pal, call me a coward if ye want to. Well, I am a coward, if I hain't got pertection; so are you; so is Tango. When it comes to that, ever' gunman, put on even chances, is a white-livered coward, and ye both know it."

Spot made another struggle to be brave, and at the same time to support Tex in his fears. "That's right—we're all lookin' fer a shade, and if we don't git it, we're cowards. But we've always had it, and we're goin' to always have it. The people don't pay no 'tention to politics and the bosses need us,—as *political leaders*"—said Spot as he winked at Tango, "and they're goin' to pertect us."

The imagination of Tex became reminiscent. "What'd one o' them Western cowboys do without a gun?"

"If they seen their shaders they'd run a mile a minute. Take Fordyce Manville, fer instance," responded Spot.

Tango observed, "Fordyce sure's got a great rep as a crack shot."

Spot's admiration grew enthusiastic. "Yes. They say he don't have to sight—he jest throws his gun like this." Having slipped his gun out, Spot was imitating throw-shots at different parts of the room, as he went on, "and can shoot the gold-fillin' out o' yer tooth."

One of Spot's throw-shot aims happened to be straight toward Tex, who let out a surprised yelp, and jumped as if he had been hit; but he pulled himself together sufficiently to observe, in alarmed whisper, "And they tell me he's got several notches on his gun."

Tex and Spot then gathered close to Tango and shuddered.

Tango became palliative. "But it's jest talk. Mebby 'tain't so at all."

"Don't fool yourself," argued Spot, "the Boss hain't caterin' t' Fordyce fer nothin'. He knows who's who. Fordyce's goin' t' be a big man. Mind what I tell ye."

Thought of the political game braced up Tex. "Yes," said he, "if he don't git a big head and turn on the Boss. That's what I'm 'fraid Shackleton 'll do."

"Shackleton! Ha! ha!" Spot laughed. "He'll eat out o' the Boss's hand, all right!"

Tango prophesied, "Well, if he don't, his head'll go in the basket mighty quick."

"That's right," replied Spot. "The Boss won't let nobody fool him; but if they're on the square, he's the *fairest man on earth*."

Tango then reasoned it all out. "Shackleton's name won't figure, anyhow. The Boss is the one what counts. Who thinks of the Governor when appointments are made? Nobody! They think of the Boss. Whose name comes up when contracts is let? The Governor? No, the Boss!"

Spot grew more cheerful. "Ye bet yer life; and can't any uv 'em complain 'gin the Boss, neither. He gives his graft-collectors a bigger percentage uv the swag than any boss we ever had, and it pays him t' do it."

Tango realized that fear had vanished from both Spot and Tex, and the time had come to encourage the spirit of team work, so he replied to Spot's praise of the Boss in a manner calculated to please and flatter Spot, as well as to encourage loyalty and confidence. "'Course it does. We're all satisfied, and we don't knock down nothin'."

Tex caught the fire. "And young Talley's a chip off'n the old block."

"Archibald's on the square with the bunch,

all right," said Spot, with faint praise, "but he'll never 'mount t' as much as the Boss. Got girl on the brain—too much."

Tango reassuringly replied, "Aw! He'll git over that. The Boss used to be the same way."

This symposium was broken up by the appearance of John Gilmore, who had been knighted "Cap" by the king Boss. John was, whichever you please, either an over-grown boy or an under-grown man, lighthearted, and possibly a little lightheaded, but not a bad sort.

Tex immediately renewed his campaign for more heat. "Say, Cap, couldn't ye git the guy t' fire up a little? It's chilly."

"The janitor?" teasingly queried Cap.

"I don't care what ye call 'im," was Tex's answer.

"His name is Jamboree Johnson, but I reckon he's the king," said Cap, as he seated himself at the small desk and took up the telephone receiver. "I'll tell 'im t' fix the fire, and mebby he will, an' mebby he'll put the fire out. Hello!" After a pause, Cap shook the receiver vigorously.

"Hello! Hello! Hello—Oh, that you, Peachie?—Well ye needn't git saucy 'bout it. I ain't goin' t' try t' eat ye.—Hello!" There was another delay. As Cap rattled the 'phone

again, he said good naturedly to Tex. "Guess she thinks *she's* the *queen*. Hello!—All right, I 'pologize. I want t' talk with the pilot of this ship—no, I mean the stoker—the feller what makes it hot fer us. *Yes*, I mean the *janitor*. T-h-a-n-k y-o-u. T-h-a-n-k y-o-u, ever so much.—Hello! Is this the king?—I mean, is this the janitor?—Well, the Boss's got some visitors up here, an' they're all shakin' fer the drinks. Can you fire up?—No, I didn't say *come* up—I said *fire* up.—All right."

II

THE MONEY ROUND UP

Telling about the Boss in particular, and bosses in general. A look behind the scenes where graft is gathered in. News of the election. Fordyce Manville begins to figure.

The Boss had a happy faculty of making everybody forget climatic conditions; so when he stalked into the office, Tango, Tex and Spot resumed a happy mood, doffed their hats to him and stood at attention.

Cap was never known to stand in awe of anybody; he didn't even have to get used to people; he was at home with everybody from the start. He placed some letters on the Boss's desk, answered a question or two and went whistling and prancing out of the door into the hall.

The Boss in this particular instance—our Boss—was a type;—it could not be denied that his like existed elsewhere. In American politics the boss is an entity, omnipresent and frequently omniscient. For that matter, every civilized country, and every section of every

civilized country, has had its Talleyrand—big or little.

We may exaggerate charges against a given concrete boss; but it is pretty safe to say that language could not construct a charge which would not be true of a composite boss—some things true of this, and some things true of that boss. Our Boss had his measure of faults, his genial qualities and his degrees of irregularity.

The reader will note the range of play employed by the Boss in all his work. He has been called a political fox. He had an object in everything. He could fawn, scold and bully all in the same sentence. He was an actor. If jollyng would work the result, he jollied. If intimidation was necessary, the tool was ready at hand. He could reach all the keys on the board, and run the scale up and down at will. He was a master of lights and shades of expression. He was at home with the underworld, and aside from his grammar, equally at home with the nabobs.

As soon as Cap went out, Tango walked over to the Boss's desk and handed him three envelopes, and with deferential attitude and voice said, "Here's the balance of what we've collected. We've got some more promised, if ye win. I hope you do stay in power Boss."

The Boss took the envelopes from Tango and laid them on the desk, and gave them no more attention at the time; another thought was in his mind.

The Boss never lost an opportunity to discipline his "workers," and this seemed a proper time for it. He looked the three gangsters over, drew his face into a serious expression, and after an ominous pause, made this impressive speech. "It'd be pretty tough on you fellers if my candidate fer Governor did lose out. If them reformers git the upper hand, you fellers won't be district leaders any more; they'll find out that ye're gunmen. They'll dig up yer records and send ye all up fer life, or mebby t' the chair." Then in a more cheerful mood he continued: "I guess it'll be all right, though. Now you boys wait outside 'til I send fer ye."

Tango, Tex and Spot promptly obeyed orders and left the room.

The Boss started to open the envelopes and examine the contents, but he had not finished when an Inspector and a Captain, in plain clothes, came in to report and deliver their graft toll. Their great respect for the Boss was shown in their salutation. They evidently regarded him as their superior officer.

"Hello, brave boys!" said the Boss, smiling

in playful protest. "A little late. All the others have reported, and with good results, too."

The Inspector removed an envelope from his pocket and handed it to the Boss, displaying some embarrassment.

The Boss opened the envelope, removed from it several bills and counted them; pitched the envelope into the waste basket, and with impatient gesture held up the bills in front of the Inspector. "Only two hundred dollars! Does Simpson think we can live on wind?"

"The best I could do, Boss."

"Well, here's your commission," said the Boss, as he handed over some of the bills.

The Inspector took out another envelope and passed it to the Boss, this time with an air of confidence. "Boss, it was like pullin' eye-teeth, but here it is."

The Boss opened the envelope, counted the money, and handed one bill to the Inspector, with the further rebuke: "A little better, but 'taint enough. Here's your percentage."

The Inspector was duly humbled. "Thank you, Boss. You've always been generous."

As the Inspector stepped back, the Captain turned over a part of his contribution, and with confident, saucy air, reported:

"This is all from Leopold. He didn't want to come across, but I told him a few things."

As the Boss investigated the contents of the Captain's envelope his approval was obvious. "Thompson, good! You're on to your job." Shook hands with Thompson, and then more seriously, "But you might 'a' got more from him this time. Why, that criminal's jest coinin' money, and he ain't givin' up enough for the privilege." As he paid the Captain his commission, he said in conciliatory tone, "I ain't kickin'. Here's yours."

The Captain then braced up with peacock pride and surprised the Boss with another envelope. "Boss, that's the best job I ever done for ye."

As the Boss pawed over the contents, he seemed to reach the height of satisfaction. "Two thousand dollars! You're a brick. That's the way to make 'em come to it. Here's your percentage," said the Boss, as he handed him a bill, and before the Captain could turn away, "And here's a little present from me besides."

The Captain bowed most humbly as he took the present. "Thank ye, Boss. I'll give this to my wife, but I don't dare tell her where it

come from, because she objects to my gettin' anything but my salary."

"Tell her I gave it to you fer bravery."

"Yes, Boss. That's fine!"

And all three laughed outright.

The Boss then said, impressively, "The boys have all done pretty well here in the city. If the bagmen had got the contractors all over the State t' come across like you officers and the district leaders have collected from the saloons and dives, I'd be better satisfied." And then added, "That'll be all, boys. Now git back t' yer duty."

The Inspector and Captain made a grand salaam as they took their leave.

After they had gone the Boss took out a huge roll of bills, removed the elastic, wrapped the bills just received around this roll, replaced the elastic, and again put the roll in his pocket; then opened the drawer of the desk and raked the checks into the drawer.

Fordyce Manville walked in and sat down. Though not employed by the Boss, Fordyce gladly made himself useful, while studying campaign methods under the master tactician.

The Boss glanced up, and greeted Fordyce in this blunt fashion: "Fordyce, git out of politics; it's hell."

“Well, Mr. Talley, I like the game; and yet I know it isn’t the best thing for me. You don’t think we’ve lost, do you?”

“That ain’t it. But politics ain’t what it used to be. Here we’ve run up to the wire, and it’s a nose-finish if we git there. They’ve put so many regulations ’round the ballot-box that they hain’t no chance t’ make a livin’ in the game like they used t’ be.”

The Boss hesitated, and then, with an impatient gesture, blurted out: “Why the hell don’t we hear from Union County? I know things is fixed up there, and if they ain’t some slip we’re all right; but I don’t like these close decisions.”

The telephone interrupted. Fordyce picked up the receiver. “Yes—Union County? Just a minute.” And he reached for a pad and pencil as he put his hand over the transmitter and looked at the Boss. “Here’s our report now.” And then in the ’phone: “Go ahead—Shackleton’s majority over a hundred? Is that certain? His election cinched? Good!”

As Fordyce hung up the receiver, the Boss brought his fist down on the table. “Now, damn ’em, we’ll see who’s runnin’ this State.”

That was the extent of his celebration. He

arose, started toward the private office, and quietly said, "Fordyce, let's run over those papers."

And the two walked out.

III

THE GUIDE TO LOVE

A happy scene between Archibald Talley and Ruth Woodstock. Archibald's "Dad" suggests a new course for Archibald's affections.

Archibald has been characterized by one of the gunmen as a "chip off the old block," but he probably recognized long ago that it was useless for him to emulate the greatness of his father in his special line—that of boss. Archibald would use the word *greatness* too as properly applying to his dad.

Strength of character commands its price, and strength of character the Boss undoubtedly had. At any rate, he had strength, whether character might be the proper word or not; and Archibald looked up to him—saw right and wrong through his eyes; refused all educational opportunities on the pretext his dad was successful without book learning. Whatever of the contemptible might manifest

itself in Archibald could hold Archibald's dad responsible for the most of it; and some of the things done by Archibald surely were contemptible.

Archibald led Ruth into the room, and her big blue eyes grew bigger in wonderment. She was surprised at the rich surroundings; and pleased because they belonged to Archibald's father.

Archibald had formed Ruth's acquaintance casually—informally—at the telephone desk where Ruth was in charge, and for two years he had found excuses to go to her desk on telephone business.

It must be said in fairness that he was not over-forward; better for Ruth if he had been; for then his power to charm and overawe would have been curtailed. But little by little he ingratiated himself. It's a long story.

Anyhow, Ruth's predilection to believe in great people—and all rich people to her were great—caused her to forget her mother's oft-repeated caution about accepting attentions from any man to whom she had not been introduced, and she went to dinner with Archibald. She sipped wine with him. The rest of the story is old. She believed.

Her knowledge of God-made laws was lim-

ited and her knowledge of man-made laws was almost nil.

Well, perhaps that is human, after all. For who does not come to the end of his own positive knowing, and from that on rely upon somebody else, as if he himself knew. It doesn't take a mere trusting girl to fall into this error, if it be an error. Men and women both, at all ages, in business and in social life, turn to some one counted superior and ask for guidance—and then blindly act upon it. It's a lottery, because sometimes it wins big and sometimes it loses fatally.

Why shouldn't Ruth believe Archibald when he promised to marry her? Why shouldn't she take his interpretation of the making of that compact? Or if the answer is ready at hand by the puritanical, or the sociological expert, then the more difficult question, why *did* she accept what Archibald said as the God-law and human-law to her?

Anyhow, that is what she did, and she was happy. Happy and trustful. No bride ever threw herself into the arms of her lawful wedded husband with more confidence of his everlasting faithfulness, nor yet with more feeling of innocence and purity than Ruth delivered herself to Archibald on his promise.

Archibald was happy too—by spasms—Ruth's beauty attracted him. They were mates in all but one thing—Archibald's ambition? No—he had none. Mates in all but Archibald's father's ambition.

If Archibald had revered his father less, his constancy to Ruth would have been more. Awakened from time to time by the thought of his father's pride, Archibald regretted his pact with Ruth. But at other times, and at most times he really loved her as much as his little heart, distributed over acres of beautiful girls, could love anyone.

Before he met Ruth, Archibald had become somewhat hardened to the life of the roué—in fact almost the hopeless libertine. Whatever else may be said of Ruth's influence, it checked this mad career.

If Hiram Talley had conferred upon his community the grace of dying before this election day it is fair to believe that Archibald Talley would have chosen to keep faith with Ruth and marry her. How the hand of ambition turns the wheel of fortune!

Archibald had many times promised Ruth a visit to his father's office in the Cafe, but he had always hesitated; he had really dreaded "breaking the news," somehow feeling that it

might not comport with the views of his Senior.

But on this day Ruth had proved so attractive, so beguiling and so happy, and on this night the twain had imbibed so much of the hilarity of good-fellowship, which always starts in among the populace just after the polls close and lasts until the wee small hours. This was one of Archibald's periods of happiness. He could not stop to speculate that anybody would take anything but the happy, natural view of things on this occasion.

After Ruth had surveyed the room and Archibald had pompously enjoyed her looks and expressions of wonder, Ruth recurred to her favorite subject—her kodak. She had always liked pictures, liked to be around where they were taken, had the most inquiring mind as to how and why; and since she was fairly independent by the bounty of Archibald, she had become a devotee to photography; and she had actually mastered the intricate art of operating a moving-picture camera.

The happy mood in which Ruth was enveloped and in which Archibald found himself now and then, particularly at this time, was shown by the conversation between them, in which the influence of the Boss over the destiny of Archibald and Ruth is also shown.

As Ruth stood before Archibald she was a veritable picture of joy; and the camera strapped to her shoulder added to her daintily swagger appearance.

"Nobody home," she observed.

"Dad 'll surely be here soon. He may be in his private office now." And then, as if nothing else mattered, Archibald stood in front of Ruth, took her face in his hands and kissed her.

Ruth again looked about in admiration. "What a splendid place for your father's headquarters!"

"Handiest place in the city," responded Archibald proudly, as he led Ruth to one of the big windows overlooking the main street. "We can stand here and see all the processions go by." He indicated by a gesture, and went on. "There's father's private office. Come over here." Then in a playful manner he conducted Ruth across the room. "This door leads right into the banquet hall—some swell!"

"I should think the noise would bother him," said Ruth.

"Ye can't hear a thing. There may be a banquet goin' on there now, for all I know." Archibald tapped on the wall. "This is a sound-proof wall, and was built in 'specially

for Dad." He then opened the door leading into the banquet hall. Immediately the noise of many people talking was heard. As he closed the door and stepped back, the noise ceased. He put his finger to his lips, indicating silence, "Listen! Do you hear anything?"

"Not a thing," Ruth ejaculated. "Isn't that fine!"

"That's the way Dad does things," boasted Archibald. "He can git anything he wants at this cafe, and do anything he pleases, too. Brings 'em more champagne trade than any customer they've got."

Ruth's wonderment increased. She still further scanned the room. "My, this is splendidly lighted. I think I could take a snapshot here. Stand over there," pointing to the center, under the great chandelier, and at the same time lifting her camera, "and I'll take your picture."

Archibald obeyed Ruth's command by crossing to the point indicated, in mimic ludicrous walk, and then good-naturedly asked, "What do you want?—Napoleon?" Suiting his attitude to his question by folding his arms and attempting to pose and look like Napoleon.

Ruth remonstrated, "No, no, not that."

Archibald smiled, screwed up his face in an

effort to look tough. "All right, here's one for the Rogues' Gallery."

"I don't want to see you there," Ruth again protested. "Give me a nice pose."

Archibald still teasing, put hands together, lifted head, turned eyes upward, solemnly, "An attitude of prayer."

"Now, Archie, I just want you."

"Ruth, you are so serious, I'm afraid you'll make me laugh." And taking a natural pose, "Well, shoot."

Ruth snapped the camera. "That's all."

"Do you suppose anything will come of it in this light?" queried Archibald.

"Why, in this white light I could get a pretty fair result with my movie camera."

"Really?" said Archibald, surprised and pleased.

"Archibald, dear, let's look at our new kodak pictures."

"Fine!" He took an envelope from his pocket and led Ruth to the Boss's desk.

Ruth playfully pushed Archibald into the Boss's chair, knelt at his feet, in happiest mood, and took the envelope.

"I'm sorry they didn't develop our Glen Island pictures." As she opened the envelope and held a picture where both could see, she

exclaimed: "Oh, that's where I snapped you and the courier at Niagara."

Archibald said to Ruth, as they looked at different pictures. "Isn't that splendid of the Rapids? My! that would do to enlarge and frame," holding a picture up to the light, "You certainly are an artist."

Archibald and Ruth were taken by surprise when the Boss and Fordyce entered. Ruth was the first to see them. She quickly arose and could not disguise her embarrassment. As Archibald sprang to his feet his father quickly put him at ease.

"Hello, my son! Shackleton's elected!"

Archibald clapped his hands with vigor. "I told ye he'd be elected." His mood then changed and betrayed the thought uppermost in his mind, even before he spoke.

"Dad, I want to introduce Miss Woodstock. Ruth, this is my dad."

"Glad to meet you, Miss Woodstock," said the Boss coldly.

Ruth extended her hand cordially. "I'm so glad to know you, Mr. Talley."

The Boss shook hands as he looked Ruth through and through. He then turned to Fordyce, and in a most informal manner intro-

duced Ruth. "Mr. Manville, Miss Woodstock."

Fordyce politely responded, "I'm pleased to meet you."

"Glad to meet you, Mr. Manville."

As Fordyce bowed himself away and crossed to the small desk, the Boss said firmly, "Archie, I want to talk with you privately." And turned to Fordyce. "Fordyce, will you show Miss Woodstock into my private office and give us the room?"

Fordyce started toward the door, but Archibald having anticipated him, opened the door politely and showed Ruth out. Fordyce picked up his hat and made his exit at the main door.

Cap came in whistling and prancing.

The Boss seemed annoyed by Cap's intrusion, and called out sharply.

"Cap!"

Cap was not dismayed, but continued acting up, as he crossed to the Boss's desk.

The Boss gave Cap a hard, steady, commanding look.

Cap yielded to the silent rebuke, slowly came to a standstill and stopped whistling.

The Boss handed Cap a bill, "Run down to

the United and bring me a box o' cigars—they know the kind I want.”

The door closed behind Cap.

“Archie, get rid o' that woman!”

“Why, Dad?”

“Git rid uv 'er, I tell ye. I don't want to insult 'er.”

“She's my fiancée.”

“The hell you say!—that woman? Are you crazy?”

“No, Dad. I'll tell you how it is.” Archibald hesitated, and hung his head. “Well, I've got to marry her, that's all.”

The blood rushed to the Boss's face. “You damn fool! After all the scrapes I've got ye out uv, hain't ye got sense 'nuff to avoid mistakes like that?”

Archibald meekly replied. “Well, that's how it is.”

The Boss saw the situation, but resolved to make the best of it. “I'm disappointed in you. Fetch her in here. I guess money'll fix 'er. Why, the new Governor is bringin' his daughter up here, and I wanted you to be on your good behavior and meet her. That means business”——and the Boss's voice became conciliatory as he continued——“and she's a smart

looker, too. Fetch Miss What-you-call-her in here—I'll talk to 'er."

While waiting for Archibald to return with Ruth, the Boss busied himself at his desk. As Archibald and Ruth came in, the Boss smiled as complacently as if he meant to bestow his blessing; and then put his hands behind his back, walked slowly until he had completed a circle around his chair.

"Won't you sit down, Miss Woodstock?" He indicated a chair by his desk. "What claim have you on my son?"

Ruth was completely stunned, but in her excitement she did the natural thing; she simply blurted out the truth. "We're engaged."

"Well, he wishes to break the engagement."

"Oh, Mr. Talley, don't ask me to do that. I—well, it is impossible."

"Nothin' is impossible. You can make some other arrangement. How much money do you want to call it off?"

Ruth was greatly excited and dumbfounded. "Money isn't the thing at all." And then her voice broke, and she merely whispered, "We must marry."

"You must marry? I say you shall not. Now, you better talk business to me while I'm in the humor."

“But, Mr. Talley, I love Archibald, and he loves me. We have such good times together.” Ruth was so optimistic that she thought Mr. Talley must be convinced, as she herself was. “Today we’ve been all over town.”

This was met by the unfeeling rebuke, “Yes, I wondered where Archibald wuz—I needed him.”

Archibald attempted to come to Ruth’s rescue. “But, Dad——”

His father raised his hand, and squelched him in uncompromising terms. “Shut up! I’m doin’ the talkin’.”

Ruth again tried her persuasion. “But, Mr. Talley, you were young once.” She lifted her camera, as if to transfuse her fetich worship of it to the imagination of Mr. Talley. “We took such lovely snapshots today, and then we’ve had such a beautiful time this evening. We’re so happy together!”

Archibald once more tried to get a hearing. “Father, you don’t know Ruth. She has such accomplishments—she’s a wonderful girl with a camera. Why, Dad, Ruth’s an expert with the moving-picture camera.

The Boss ignored Archibald. “I tell you, Miss Woodstock, this engagement must be

broken off. You're not goin' to compel my son to marry you, are you?"

Ruth was bewildered; her head was reeling; she scarcely knew what she was saying, as she muttered, "Well—I—well—— No, not exactly; but it's too late, Mr. Talley; we must marry."

The Boss persisted without mercy. "It's an easy matter fer ye to git out o' that trouble. You're smart enough to know what I mean. A girl'd better do anythin' than disgrace herself and her family."

IV

THE SHAMBLES

The ratification crowd arrives. The Governor and his daughter are in evidence. The Boss starts another campaign.

The grill to which the Boss was subjecting Ruth was brought to an abrupt end by the noise of a band, horns, bells and human voices heard, at a distance, outside. Cap rushed in excitedly with the box of cigars for which the Boss had sent him, telling the Boss that the new Governor was coming with his daughter and a big crowd "follerin'." Cap held out to the Boss the coupons which accompanied the cigars. "Will ye gimme the tradin' stamps? I'm savin' up to buy an automobile." The Boss waved Cap aside with a gesture indicating his impatience and his acquiescence.

Cap's hilarity turned to sadness the moment

he laid eyes on the forlorn face of Ruth. Cap himself may never be able to describe his feelings, though he shall be permitted to attempt it.

Ruth played the role of mouse and meekly took her place in a corner of the room, awaiting the fate over which she herself knew she had no control.

The noise of the crowd came nearer. The Boss stepped gallantly to the door and opened it to welcome the newly elected Governor, Hon. Lancelot Shackleton. Judge Collins came in.

The Boss's work is never done. No sooner has he finished with one campaign than he starts the machinery for another. And by the way this may be, probably is, the secret of the power of the boss in politics.

The conflict between the boss on the one side and the people on the other side is irrepresible. The difference between the two sides is that the boss is always organized and his followers—the soldiers of his army—sleep ever on their guns, while the people who are opposed to the boss and his system organize spasmodically. Once in a while the spasm reaches the point of overwhelming interest and the boss loses a battle. If the boss is ever sub-

jugated it will be because, in the evolution of self-government the people opposed to the boss shall emulate him to the extent of keeping themselves perfectly organized and everlastingly at it.

True to his tradition of starting a new fight the moment the old one is won, the Boss cordially shook hands with the new Governor as he entered and said, "Allow me to congratulate you, Governor—this is a great victory for the organization—the next man I want to see win is Judge Collins for the next mayor of this city." Whereupon the Boss slapped the judge on the back in both familiar and vigorous fashion, "With you in the Governor's chair and Judge Collins in the Mayor's chair we would have things our own way and none of them reformers could interfere with us," said he to the Governor. The Governor smiled. Was his smile significant? Did it mean that he himself was not in sympathy with reform, or may it be put down as complaisancy? This seed for the mayoralty crop was planted a year before the mayoralty election, but none too early to start the planting according to the vigilant methods of the political boss. The only unusual feature of it was that the Boss named his candidate openly so long in advance,

instead of working under cover till the last moment; but for some reason he chose to do it. Thus Judge Collins was, willy nilly, led into the political shambles.

At this point Fordyce Manville and Edith entered, both aglow with pleased excitement.

The cheering under the bay-window finally drew the attention of the Boss. He picked up the box of cigars, stepped to the window and threw the box out with the encouraging words, "Boys, help yourselves to cigars." The crowd applauded and cheered.

Tango rushed in, crossed to the bay-window and beckoned to the Governor, who immediately joined him at the window. Tango took charge, calling to the crowd:

"Boys, three cheers fer Hon. Lancelot Shackleton, the new Governor. Hip! Hip!"

"Hooray! Hooray! Hooray! Tiger! Speech! Speech!" was heard from the crowd outside.

The Governor lifted his hands for silence, and proceeded: "Boys, I'm proud to be with you tonight."

The crowd applauded.

The Governor went on: "This is the happiest moment of my life."

Again the crowd applauded and cheered.

"I'm under great obligation to you," continued the Governor.

The crowd renewed the cheering.

The speech went on, "I am especially under obligation to that wise, forceful leader whom you all love—Mr. Hiram Talley."

This open praise of the Boss was taken by some people to indicate a thorough understanding between the Boss and the Governor up to that time; and by others it was regarded as tactics for delay before the Governor should assert himself. Most of the crowd outside, at any rate, took it for genuine praise of the Boss, and increased the volume of their cheers as they threw their hats in the air and yelled, "Bravo! Bravo!"

A voice from the crowd was heard, "Stick to him and you'll be President." And this the crowd applauded and cheered.

The Governor seemed encouraged. "I cannot find words to thank you. But I want you to remember one thing—when I get to the Capitol what has heretofore been known as the Executive Mansion will be known as the People's House."

The crowd grew more vociferous.

Mark Antony could not have represented Cæsar to better advantage before the multi-

tude than the Governor represented himself in his next utterance, "And the latch string will be out for the rich and poor alike."

The enthusiasm of the crowd knew no bounds.

The Governor concluded: "It shall be my purpose to represent all of the people. I thank you!"

Before the renewed applause had died down the Boss, as if realizing that enough praise had been meted out to the Governor, seized this psychological opportunity to put his candidate for next mayor favorably before the "workers." As the Governor stepped back the Boss took his place in the center of the window and commanded quiet by lifting his hand. He then proceeded: "Boys, let's give three cheers for the man we expect to make our next Mayor, Judge Collins. Hip! Hip!"

The crowd responded in vigorous fashion, "Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!"

A citizen called up to him from the outside, "Boss, don't forget that appointment you promised me."

The Boss, with an air of complete confidence, responded, "I'll attend to that," and waved him by.

Another citizen was heard in his petition,

“Boss, I done all I could. You’ll fix me up with the Governor, won’t you?”

The Boss responded, a little impatiently, “It’ll be all right.” And then addressed himself to the entire crowd outside. “All you boys’ll find the Governor the right sort. I’ll look out fer ye. Don’t give it another thought.”

It is significant of politics, as understood by the “workers,” that the appeals for positions were made to the Boss, who had no credentials, and not to the Governor, who had just been clothed with the power to give out positions. At any rate, this satisfied the crowd, and they applauded as if they had already received each his choice appointment.

Spot, who had slipped in unobserved, then crowded up to the side of the Boss in the window and called out, “Boys let’s give three cheers for the Boss. Hip! Hip!”

The crowd responded heartily, “Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!”

The Boss brought these felicitations to a close. “Boy’s, that’s fine! Now scoot back to the Hall and tell ’em the new Governor’ll be there soon.”

The crowd again showed their approval by yelling for the Boss, and set out for the Hall;

their voices and conversation growing fainter and fainter until they could no longer be heard by the Boss and his visitors.

V

LOVE TURNED TO SCORN

Archibald, attracted by the Governor's beautiful daughter, inclines toward the Boss's advice. Ruth and Cap get acquainted. Cap is impressed with Ruth's view of morals. Archibald gets "rid uv that woman."

The Boss had the smile of victory and hope on his brow as he crossed toward the Governor.

The Governor, too, seemed in the best of spirits as he took Edith by the arm and presented her. "Mr. Talley, permit me to introduce my daughter. Edith, Mr. Talley."

Edith did not gush as she received the introduction, but her conduct was polite. "I'm pleased to meet you, Mr. Talley."

"I'm glad to meet the First Lady of the State," responded the Boss.

The Governor once more expressed his gratitude. "Mr. Talley, I'm under great obligations to you."

The Boss was used to such compliments; his

mind was evidently on something else. "Governor," said he, indicating Archibald, "you know my son?"

"Yes," replied the Governor, shaking hands with Archibald, "Archibald has been of great assistance to me among the boys."

"Governor, I congratulate you," said Archibald, with a smile.

"Mr. Talley, permit me to introduce my daughter. Edith, Mr. Talley, Jr."

"I'm delighted to meet you, Miss Shackleton," showing a little embarrassment. "I'm surprised we hain't never met before."

"So am I," Edith responded. "I've been a regular campaigner with my father. I've been around a good deal with Mr. Manville," she said, gushingly. "He's been very nice to me. He just came in." She looked straight at Fordyce, caught his eye, and smiled ingenuously.

Archibald tried to appear indifferent, as he indicated a chair near the Boss' desk, and said to Edith, "Won't you sit down?"

As Edith sat, Fordyce crossed to her side, saying, "Aren't you proud of your father's victory?"

"Wasn't it perfectly splendid?" replied Edith, with enthusiasm. "And he thinks you were responsible for a lot of the votes."



“AREN'T YOU PROUD OF YOUR FATHER'S VICTORY?”

TILDEN F

Fordyce modestly protested, "Oh! Ho! Ho! Not many."

"Well, very few could make all the difference," urged Edith, "the election was so close."

Archibald deliberately placed himself between Fordyce and Edith, and undertook to monopolize her society.

"It has been such a wonderful campaign, hasn't it? I never got so much interested before."

Whereupon Fordyce bowed himself away as gracefully as possible, and engaged in conversation with the Governor.

While Archibald and Edith proceeded in a tete-a-tete, Spot crossed to where Ruth sat, near the small desk. "Hello, little girl. Wuz ye in the ratification parade?" he asked, in teasing manner.

"No, sir," murmured Ruth, as she turned from Spot.

Spot persisted, "Needn't be so high-falutin', I know'd ye when ye wuz a telephone girl, before ye got them glad rags and shiners." As Spot said this he dangled one of Ruth's ear-bobs in a familiar, tantalizing manner.

Ruth shrugged her shoulders, and drew away.

The Boss stepped up to the Governor with watch in hand. "Governor, they've arranged a ratification meetin' at the Hall. We can jest about git there in time to greet the boys."

"With pleasure, Mr. Talley."

The Boss then gave his general directions, preliminary to departure. "Archibald, I'm expectin' Senator Black. You stay here and see him. Tango, take the boys and clear the crowd below."

By this time Tex had come in, so the body-guard were at the Boss' service.

Tango motioned to Tex and Spot, and the three walked out.

"Come, Edith," gently commanded the Governor.

Edith arose and shook hands with Archibald. "Good-bye, Mr. Talley."

"Not good-bye," Archibald remonstrated, as he arose, "I must see you soon again." And then in low tone said something more to Edith.

The Governor and Fordyce walked out, arm in arm.

"And, Archibald," said the Boss firmly, as he gave a glance at Ruth, "finish the job I started. You know what I mean." Having fixed this thought in Archibald's mind, he walked out alone.

At this point the noise of conversation in the office had sufficiently died down so that the Neostyle, which Cap was using in the private office, could be heard. This had no significance to anybody except to Ruth. She noted it, as was shown in her after conversation with Cap.

Archibald pushed a button on the side of the Boss's desk, which brought Cap into the office.

"Cap, I'll be back in a minute," said Archibald, and without giving Ruth even so much as a glance, took Edith gently by the arm and led her out.

When Archibald was introduced to Edith by her father, he saw the force of Hiram Talley's argument. He knew what his father meant when he said Edith "was a good looker," and having in his heart the educated desire to help along any plan of the Boss, no matter how nefarious, he took a strong resolution to remove any barrier that Ruth might form between him and the Governor's daughter. The rivalry between Fordyce, who had already merited the good opinion of Edith, and Archibald, who had just met her, spurred Archibald on all the more in his quest, so when the crowd was clearing to go to the ratification meeting

and the Boss said to Archibald on the side, "Finish the job I started; you know what I mean," Archibald heard it as if a welcome command from the king, and after gently leading Edith to the door and holding a tete-a-tete with her outside, he came back resolved to obey orders.

Meantime Cap and poor little Ruth found themselves alone and proceeded to get better acquainted.

Cap timidly ventured, "Say, girlye, somebody hain't been treatin' ye right."

"You hit it right, but how'd you know?"

'Aw, I'm wise—I've seen so much of it. Say, ye hain't got nothin' on me. The Boss's fired me. This is my last day."

"Is that so? I'm sorry."

"That's all right. The Boss said he was sorry, too; but I guess he's glad he's sorry."

"Why?"

"It's all on 'count o' Archibald. Told his Dad I spied on 'im when he wuz talkin' t' a girl in the office."

"Did you?"

"Yes. But I got my p'inters from the Boss." As Cap said this he whistled and pranced about the room until Ruth rather impatiently called out: "What do you mean?"

"See them portieres?" queried Cap, as he pointed to the portieres over the door leading into the private office.

"Yes," responded Ruth.

Cap, with an air of still greater importance, went on: "You went through that door into the Boss' private office."

Ruth merely responded "Yes."

"Well, when the Boss wants t' find out what people's talkin' 'bout, he plants 'em here." And as Cap said this he indicated a point near the Boss's desk and crossed to the door leading into the private office, continuing, "The Boss then excuses himself and goes into his private office—like this." Cap quickly shot through the door leading into the private office, slammed the door, and an instant later poked his head through the portieres.

Ruth exclaimed, "That's funny. You slammed the door."

Cap strutted out. "Yes, made a noise shuttin' it, but 'tain't necessary t' wake 'em up opening it."

Ruth changed the subject. "So you did spy on Archibald?"

"Yep, and more'n once. The way he flirts with girls, and the way girls come here t' git flirted with'd make anybody curious 'bout 'im."

"Gee, Cap, what a stunt you could have done if you had had my movie-camera."

"How's that?"

"You'd 'a' had their pictures. My movie camera sounds just like that Neostyle in there—I'm sure. Go turn it once."

Cap quickly complied and the noise of the Neostyle was heard again. As Cap returned he eagerly asked, "Does it?"

"You couldn't tell them apart."

"Hain't that the goods?" exclaimed Cap.

"Why do they call you Cap? That isn't your name, is it?"

"Nope. My name's John. The Boss calls ever' boy that 'tends the door Cap. He don't care nothin' 'bout what his name is. He'll call the next boy Cap."

"So they fired you?"

"Yep, and that ain't the worst of it. I've got a mother t' support, and I don't know where I'll git another job; and the Boss makes all the boys wear a uniform like this," making a gesture indicating his uniform, "and we've got t' pay fer 'em ourselves. I had t' pay four dollars fer this uniform, and I can't git it back unless the next boy buys it off'n me."

"That's too bad."

"I'll lose my graft now, too," Cap asserted, petulantly.

"What do you mean?" inquired Ruth.

"Well, I won't have no influence with the Boss."

"Influence? How do you use influence?"

Cap put his thumbs under his arms, pompously pranced, whistling, across the room and back, and declared, "Why, I'm a grafter." And then he hesitated, and continued, sadly, "But now that'll be gone, too."

"A grafter?"

"Yes. I got the wop his job at the boot-black stand in the hall by askin' the Boss fer it."

"That isn't graft," said Ruth, smiling.

"Wait 'til I tell ye. I git half o' what he makes." He took from his pocket a handful of small coin, and jingled it.

Ruth then realized what he meant, and asked, "Do you think that's right?"

"Ever'body's doin' it," said Cap quickly. "That's the way the Boss does with everything. And ever'body what comes t' this office's got some graft. But I want t' git into it big, and git rich, like the Boss and his friends."

"I wouldn't do that. You'll get along better if you're honest."

"That's honest when ever'body else is doin' it."

Ruth looked serious, and said, "I'd just as soon steal."

"That's too dangerous," replied Cap, and then he seemed impressed as he went on. "Anyhow, do you think graft's the same as stealin'?"

Ruth laughed. "Well, graft and stealing have a family resemblance." And after a moment's pause, her countenance lit up as if she had a brilliant idea. "Oh, say, I'll buy your uniform."

Cap looked skeptical, as he said to her, "You're jest kiddin' me. You ain't got no use fer it, unless ye jest wanta make me a present o' four plunks."

Ruth reassured him, "No, not that, although I'd like to help you. But I want that uniform to wear to a mask ball."

"Honest, do you mean it?"

"Yes." And taking a card from her handbag she passed it to Cap. "Here, stick this in your pocket. That's my name and address. Bring the suit around there tomorrow morning and get your four dollars. But don't say a word to anybody, because I want to take them all by surprise at the mask ball."

Cap put his finger to his mouth, "My trap's sealed up. I never tell nobody nothin', only—"

Further negotiations between Cap and Ruth were interrupted.

When Archibald returned with the resolute purpose of closing issues with Ruth he cleared the room for the purpose by sending Cap out to mail a letter.

Ruth's heart was too full to wait for Archibald's initiative, so she crossed rapidly to him, and said, "Archie, how could you?"

"Well, Ruth, it's no use. Things have changed."

"But I haven't changed. You're not going to let your father drag you away from me?" And she attempted to put her arms about his neck.

Archibald pushed her away.

Ruth sat by the small desk and buried her face in her arms.

"Cut out the salt water," Archibald commanded. "'Tain't no use. Father's right."

Ruth sobbed pitifully.

Archibald gazed at her, then looked about the room, crossed to the Boss's chair and sat down; again he looked at Ruth and became impatient, but as if determined to wear her out started to hum a tune.

Ruth lifted her head, gazed at Archibald, noted his seeming indifference.

"All right, you can go. You are free. I'll take the worst of it. But you will never be happy. You know you have wronged me, and you'll never get it out of your mind."

Archibald seemed encouraged. "That's the girl. That's the way to look at it. I'll be your friend, if you need a little help now and then."

"No, no, I can't let you go," cried Ruth, as she changed her mood and crossed rapidly to Archibald, and threw her arms about his neck. "You are mine! You are mine! I can't let you go!"

Archibald arose and forced Ruth away from him.

"Please, Archie, please," Ruth pleaded. "We're the same as married. You won't desert me for that doll-faced daughter of the Governor? She hasn't as much brains as my camera." And she tapped her camera with her hand.

Archibald urged, "You said I was free. Stick to your word."

Ruth fought back. "Stick to yours. You promised to marry me. You stick to your word." She then hesitated and grew pathetic. "Please, Archie, we can be ever so happy.



“DAMN YOU! DON'T YOU KNOW BETTER?”

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Don't you care about these politicians—the Governor and the Governor's daughter. You've told me you didn't care what the world thought—that's the way you got me to give in to you—you made me think it didn't matter what the world thought."

Archibald was manifestly very much vexed as he started, "But my father——"

Ruth became highly impassioned and broke in. "You didn't ask your father when you got me to leave my position. I was happy then—you know I was. My mother was happy. I was taking care of her. You didn't ask your father when you persuaded me to go to the lobster palaces with you and drink champagne. You didn't ask your father when you gave me this jewelry and fine dresses. Are you younger now?"

"Don't, Ruth. Don't be a fool."

"Why don't you tell me not to be a mother? Yes, maybe I am a fool, but if I am it didn't start tonight—it started when you made me think we were the same as married. Please, Archie, please." Again she threw her arms around Archibald's neck.

Archibald grasped her wrists, disengaged her. "Damn you! I'll show you how to try to govern me! Don't you know better?" And in the struggle hurled her to the floor. "You

might as well know the truth. I've seen the Governor's daughter, and I'm goin' t' git her—and marry her. Take that!"

Ruth arose slowly to a sitting posture on the floor, buried her face in her hands.

Archibald scornfully and pitilessly glared at her.

Ruth took in his hateful attitude, slowly arose, and in suppressed excitement said, "I'm convinced. You've made it impossible for either one of us ever to be happy again. You know you've wronged me and I'll make *you suffer*." Her manner and voice now indicated scorn and defiance, as she went on, "You say you're going to marry the Governor's daughter; but I say you shall not. You've ruined the happiness of enough girls, you monster! You brute! Why did God shape you like a man? You viper!" She had become hysterical; she walked backward towards the door; her voice struck a higher key, and she talked more rapidly, "I'll get even with you. You and your father think you can buy anybody with your money. Well, you can't buy me."

She took off her rings and earbobs and nervously laid them down on the small desk; and in great excitement fumbled with her pearl necklace in an effort to unfasten it; then with

a fit of impatience she snatched off the necklace, hurled it at Archibald, completely lost control of herself, and in a loud shrieking voice, as she put her hand on the door knob, she cried out:

“I’ll get even with you—I’ll get even with you.” As she opened the door she fairly screamed, “You’ll see! I’ll fix *you!*” And as she darted out she emphasized her outraged feelings by slamming the door.



PART TWO

(VI to XI inclusive.)

Relating the happenings in the Executive Chamber, eight months after the Governor's election.

ANTON
TILLY

VI

THE PRICE OF FAME

Edith's heart problem clashes with her father's political ambition. Fordyce Manville, having become the Governor's private secretary, continues his interest in Edith.

Edith never presented a more lovely picture. For the first time in her life her sunshine was enveloped in clouds. An idealistic artist might have chosen her for the subject of a masterpiece entitled "The Fretful Sun," or "The Teasing Clouds," or, a more obvious title, "Sunshine and Shadow."

She stood beside her father as he sat in front of the massive desk in the Executive Chamber. Governor Shackleton himself had broached the heart question, for he was prompted unconsciously by a selfish interest, born of a lack of realization. The noble side of his nature was for the time being submerged in his political ambition.

The Boss, with far-sighted purpose or possibly by instinct, had presaged the possibility that he could not continue to control the Governor by the ordinary simple means of threats, intimidation and clever offers of profit and opportunity. So he had encouraged Archibald more and more in his already well-developed interest in Edith. This was without plot, but merely by innuendo, praise and incidental suggestions of the business advantage of an alliance with the Governor's daughter.

On many occasions too, the Boss had hinted this same thing to the Governor. He had dilated upon the hidden virtues of Archibald. He had given Archibald a clean bill of health. The side light on all these conversations was the crafty insinuation that the Governor might become President of the United States, under certain conditions.

Eight months had elapsed since election night, when Edith first met Archibald and she had formed an opinion of him.

The Governor had broached this subject to Edith in a most roundabout, innocent way, but Edith did not need a sermon to make her grasp the situation. Thus the shadow, when she said:

“But, father, I don't like young Mr. Talley.

He isn't refined. He's deceitful—I can tell it by his eye. I would be afraid of him." And she put her arm about the Governor's neck. "Please, father."

It would be difficult to tell from the Governor's conduct or speech whether he had capitulated and merely wanted gently to rebuke his daughter's lack of co-operation, by showing her what he, himself, must sacrifice; or whether the selfish part of his nature was still holding on—impelling him to a willingness yet to trade Edith's affection for his preferment. His first sentence would imply surrender, as he patted Edith's hand, gently disengaged her, and said, "There, there, daughter. I won't say any more about it." And yet if still resolved his look, action and speech could not be more effectually directed to the sensitive, sympathetic, loving nature of his daughter. He hesitated, looked up, dropped his hand on the desk in meditative gesture, looked at Edith and slowly drawled out:

"But if you *could* learn to care for Archibald, and marry him, the Boss would make me President of the United States."

As Edith dropped to the chair, put her elbows on the desk and buried her face in her hands the Governor was deeply touched. And

yet it is a question whether he was convinced. "Don't, daughter," he sadly muttered. "I won't insist."

"You are so good, father," Edith hesitated. "I'm sorry you have to depend so much on——"

The Governor would not let her finish. "On what?"

Edith quickly responded, "I shouldn't say it."

"Say what you think, daughter."

Edith, quickly perceiving her partial victory, "I am sorry you have to depend on such a man. I don't like the Boss—he's selfish. He's trying to use you, father, for his own selfish ends. I know it."

The Governor was ill at ease. "But, daughter——"

Edith followed up her advantage. "You won't yield to him if he asks you to do anything dishonest? Father, I would not want you President of the United States if you had to do that. I would rather have you just my good father."

The dual in the Governor's mind was depicted by his response, "I don't intend to do anything wrong daughter. But the Boss is powerful and he wants to see Archibald——"

Edith shuddered, threw up her hands and, from her changed mood, appeared to contemplate surrender.

"I want to help you, father. I'll think it over."

If Edith were not guileless this response might be thought tactful, for it had its effect. With all his great affection for his daughter the Governor was stubborn in his determination. The father in him was aroused. The use of tears and surrender were the proper military tactics for Edith's purpose.

The Governor arose and put his hand gently on Edith's head. "My little girl, it was brutal to make the suggestion. Your heart shall not be my purchase price of power, and your intuition will guard my own honor."

His sympathy appealed to her strongly, and as she arose she started to plead the other side of the case. "But, father——"

The Governor took his cue. "I see it all; not another word." and he gently kissed Edith. "Now excuse me a few moments." He started towards his private office, hesitated, retraced his steps, gazed at his now-more-than-ever beautiful daughter, then fondly embraced her. "You are all I have left to love now and your happiness comes before aught else."

Without waiting for a reply the Governor went into his private office, leaving Edith to her own thoughts.

The last sentence spoken by her father awakened the memory of her mother, whose solicitude for Lancelot Shackleton's dream of future greatness had continued through all the years of his progress, until brought to an end by her death, a little over a year before he was elected Governor. Edith recalled how she herself had striven all the more to help her father since her mother's influence was withdrawn. She mentally reviewed the whole life of the three, from the time her memory could serve, and this was the first time she had ever felt occasion to pity her father.

She sat beside her father's desk, buried her face in her hands and sobbed. After a few moments she arose, took out a handkerchief, wiped away a tear and looked about the room blankly. Then she braced up with body rigid, hesitated, debated, crossed to the small desk on the other side of the room, handled papers on the desk in a fondling manner and sat in the desk chair.

This desk belonged to Fordyce Manville. During her father's campaign Fordyce and she were thrown together a good deal, but since that time the opportunities for seeing

each other had not been so frequent; Fordyce had become the Governor's private secretary and his time had been much occupied. He had done little in a social way; and Edith had been so busy in her own social life that she seldom found time to call at the Executive Chamber. Fordyce himself might have wished it otherwise, but his sense of propriety prevented advances in a social way, particularly where his chief, the Governor, might be concerned. And the independent nature of Edith would impel her to avoid rather than seek contact with one of the opposite sex whom she greatly admired.

As Edith sat at the desk of Fordyce meditating—involuntarily comparing her father's lawyer—cowboy—secretary, with Archibald, the son of the Boss and “a chip off the old block,” she realized that she was analyzing their respective characters. Perhaps she did not realize that it vitally concerned her; that part, if existent, was very likely subconscious; she went back in her imagination to the Western life which she had never seen but which Mr. Manville had given her some word pictures of. She had read in books of the sturdy character of the cowboys. She believed that a woman's honor was safe, even on the Western plains, with these sons of rough and ready toil. And

then she recalled the stories she had heard about Archibald. She knew without anybody just precisely telling her how Archibald had treated Ruth Woodstock. In a general way she set him down as a second or third generation degenerate; as a young man who at the very best might be regarded as careless of the honor of girls.

As she drew this picture in much more detail than is here expressed, Fordyce Manville stood before her vision as a mental and moral giant; while beside him stood the physical form of Archibald, encasing the pygmy mind and a stunted, depraved, moral fibre.

The contrast was overwhelming, so it is not surprising that when she looked up at the very moment when this picture was clear, on the canvas of her imagination, and saw the real Fordyce Manville, who had just returned and stopped at the threshold, she should show an unusual amount of deference. At any rate she did rise quickly, and blushing said, "Oh, Mr. Manville, wasn't it presumptuous of me to occupy your chair?"

Fordyce, not wanting in gallantry, quickly crossed and greeted her. "I am honored by your call—but of course you called to see your father. If I only dared tell you how gladly I

would have you feel at home with any possession of mine, but of course——”

Edith had somewhat recovered her composure and would not let him go on. “I saw my father, and I am almost sorry.”

“Won’t you be seated?” said Fordyce, indicating a chair near his own.

Edith complied, and as Fordyce also sat down he asked. “Are you joking? It can’t be possible that you would ever be sorry for seeing your father.”

Edith was sorry she hinted a criticism of her father and this was her fortunate opportunity to turn it away. “You like my father?” smilingly asked Edith.

Fordyce was about transported, he was nearly dazed. “Yes,” he replied blankly. “I like his personality and I like him because everything he says rings true, and I could add, if you would not think me too bold, I like him because he *is* your father.”

Whether Edith’s response was artless or designed, no one but Edith knows; possibly she doesn’t. “That’s perhaps the greatest reason I like him, but I didn’t think you’d feel that way.” Then she hesitated a few moments, seemed confused by a realization of frankness, resolved bravely, and continued: “It’s too bad

that a high-minded man like my father will permit himself to be influenced by such a man as Mr. Talley, just for the sake of fame."

"Miss Shackleton, don't be afraid of that influence on your father. It will not go beyond practical and proper limitations."

Fordyce's faith in Edith's father seemed to revive the sad part of the dual she had been fighting at the time her father left her alone. She gave a suppressed sigh, arose quickly, to dissemble, but could not refrain from making an appeal. "But I have no right to bother you."

The sympathy of Fordyce was aroused. He knew that something was the matter; he dared not hope it concerned him favorably. He arose quickly, and made perhaps the most effective speech possible to reach the agitated mind of Edith.

"Miss Shackleton, you have something on your mind. Won't you tell me? Is it anything I can help you in? I would like to prove to you that——"

The unexpected appearance of the Governor left Fordyce in doubt as to the effect of what he said. The Governor awakened him from his dream. "Oh, Fordyce, I am ready to look at those papers now."

Fordyce bowed himself away from Edith, crossed the room to the Governor's private office, saying "Yes, Governor, I think they must be ready."

Fordyce Manville did not know Edith's opinion of him as compared with her opinion of Archibald Talley, but the picture she had drawn in reverie was ingenuously unveiled to her father in a single sentence, "Father, I wish young Mr. Talley were such a man as Mr. Manville."

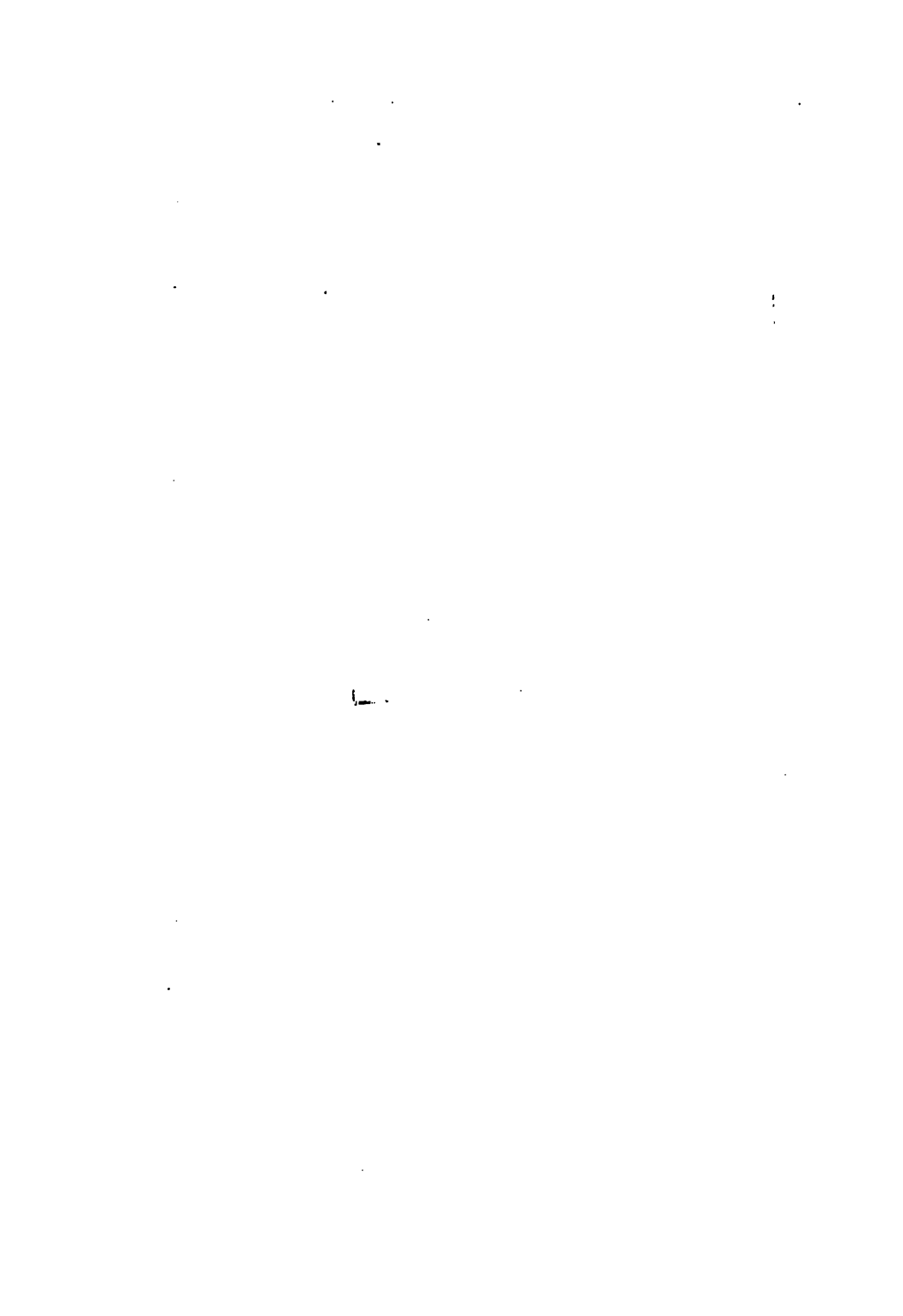
The astonished Governor mildly rebuked the troubled daughter. "Why, Edith, can it be possible? I like Mr. Manville very much, but I did not dream of this."

Again Edith spoke frankly, saying, "He is true as steel. You can trust him. I know I wouldn't be afraid to."

The Governor, in sharp but kindly tone, asked, "Edith, has he said anything?"

Edith had the last say. "Why, father, no; in fact, I think he would be a regular John Alden."

The unexpected visit of the Boss and Judge Collins prevented what might have ended in a heart-to-heart talk about *Edith's heart*.



VII

THE CLAWS OF THE BOSS

The Governor wavers under the Boss's pressure. Impeachment threatened. The Boss brings in the gunmen and shows the tricks of elections. The breach widens between the Boss and the Governor.

Whatever may have been Edith's wish, there is little doubt but that the Governor welcomed an interruption. He did not feel equal to a further contest with Edith on the subject which concerned her most of all and of which he could not count himself a pastmaster. At any rate, the play had shifted and the subject was now to be the game of sordid politics, in which Governor Shackleton believed only men could tilt; and in which he felt more capable than in the game of human hearts.

The Boss and Judge Collins had exchanged greetings with the Governor and Edith, and Edith had gracefully excused herself. Fordyce came in just as Edith was leaving and just in time to exchange most sympathetic glances with her. He spoke to the Boss and Judge

Collins and laid some papers on the desk for the Governor's signature.

Judge Collins excused himself, leaving the Governor, the Boss and Fordyce sole occupants of the room. The Boss fawningly asked Fordyce how he liked his new job, and as Fordyce gave a polite answer and crossed to his desk the Boss opened the real subject in rather a clever way.

When you know the Boss you will realize that his method of opening was not accidental, nor unstudied. The Boss could do coarse work, but he was also a master of finesse. He appreciated men of dignity, even though that dignity were "Boss-conferred." His air of diffidence with the graceful, gradual transition to the other relations, whatever these relations might need to be, was often noted, and sometimes dreaded.

He knew that the Governor liked Fordyce. He feared Fordyce more than he did the Governor.

While the Boss did nothing without design it must be admitted, of course, that he sometimes missed fire. He did in this case when he said to the Governor:

"Fordyce'll make you a good man. And, by the gods! it's hard to get good men." Because

Fordyce would rather take hard knocks and simple justice than be flattered.

The Governor's response, "You never had much trouble," led along the road the Boss wished to travel.

"I can't even keep an office boy any more. I'd like to come across a good one right now. They're all so meddlesome. I fire about one a week. The same way with clerks."

Again the Governor unconsciously led in saying, "Jackson's all right, isn't he?"

"Yes, but he's expectin' that appointment from you as Commissioner o' Highways, so I'll lose him, too," said the Boss, with provoking assurance.

The Governor replied doubtfully, "I've had several applications for that appointment. I haven't decided yet."

"Well, give it to Jackson. He's all right. He's been in my office a good while," said the Boss in a matter-of-fact way.

The Governor queried, "Isn't he interested in your partner's contracting business?"

This irritated the Boss and he began to show his claws. "Well, what of it?"

The Governor weakly responded, "I've got to keep the road-building free from the appearance of graft."

The Boss began to run the scale from sunshine to shadow; but the transition was gradual, and the start characterized by quiet force. "What's that you say, Governor? You know you're not making a campaign speech now. You're jest talkin' to me"—slapping himself on the chest—"to me—Hiram Talley."

Then the fighting part of the Governor began to show. "Yes, I know, Mr. Talley. But I have appointed your man Warden of Prisons; I have appointed your man Commissioner of Public Service; I have appointed a judge that you suggested to fill a vacancy. All of these positions are executive or judicial, and I assume it is all right, but——"

The Boss tilted back. "But what? I'm the same Hiram Talley that nominated you for Governor, and elected you. But what?"

The Governor could feel his resolutions slipping and yet he would not give in. His words were strong, but his manner of reply showed him ill at ease. "The public, as you know, have sanctioned the expenditure of a good many millions of dollars on roads, and if the people don't think it is spent honestly for roads it would hurt me politically."

The Boss's quick answer started in derision "H'm!" Then quietly sarcastic, "Of course, I

couldn't hurt you! See here, Shackleton, do you want to be President of the United States?"

"Well," the Governor started, but he was not permitted to finish.

The Boss followed up the advantage in his quiet, masterly way, "Well—yes, well—a deep well, too. Look into it. Who's got the delegates of this State in his inside pocket?"

Then as he slapped his hand over his side pocket his voice carried both a threatening and a plaintive suggestion. "Who can manipulate the National Convention and make deals with the delegation from ever' big State? Say, Governor, don't let it git away from you that I make politics my business."

The Governor looked at him, and replied slowly, "Yes, I know. But lately you have made me go to extremes, and now you exact an unreasonable thing. I must decline."

The Boss uncovered his claws just a little more, but still kept them pretty well masked with fur, as he extended the scope of his demand to show strength, instead of showing any sign of retreat. "Governor, don't be too hasty about declinin' anythin' I ask. You are standin' in your own light. Look here, we are goin' to have a mayoralty election down there and

Judge Collins is goin' to be nominated. Now, I not only want you to appoint Jackson Commissioner of Highways, but I want you to support Collins."

The Governor and Judge Collins had previously come to an agreement to disagree.

"But——" started the Governor.

The Boss broke in. "I know ye don't think so much of him personally, but it's politics and we've got to play politics. I want you to arrange your affairs so ye can go down and stump fer him. He'll be elected anyhow, but I want to give you a chance to have a hand in it, and with Judge Collins Mayor of the metropolis I guess we'll have things pretty well our own way, and that is so whether you, as Governor, agree with us or not."

He paused a few moments and then, with steady, quiet gaze, asked, "Do ye see the advantage of bein' in on it and of carryin' out my wishes in regard to State appointments?"

The Governor seemed to weaken. "I doubt if I can support Judge Collins. I should think you would try to find somebody with a better record."

"His record is all right," snapped the Boss, "and one thing ye can say about him, he never goes back on his friends. He plays politics,

keeps his promises, and takes orders.”

In his response the Boss implied the shortcomings with which, so far, he had not seen fit to charge the Governor outright, but it was pointed enough to stir the Governor again to a renewed resentment.

“You can nominate Judge Collins, perhaps, but you can’t elect him,” the Governor ventured. “The popular sentiment against that sort of man is already too strong, and it will grow stronger.”

With a shaft of ridicule the Boss started. “I thought ye had more nerve than to——”

There were no cues prearranged for what was about to happen, but the Boss knew the play would come.

John Gilmore entered, unceremoniously whistling and prancing. He was the same John who had served as office boy to the Boss until cashiered for spying on Archibald in his warfare of love. John suddenly realized the dignity of his new position as office boy to the Governor, brought himself up with a sharp turn, pompously strode across and extended a card tray to the Governor. The Governor took the piece of paper from the tray and read aloud, “Jake Upstein, George Fosdick and Maurice Goldberg.”

The Boss, as if surprised, broke in: "Oh, yes, they are friends of yours," whereupon the Governor directed John to show them in.

When these three visitors crossed the threshold the Boss greeted them, shook hands with each, and then presented them to the Governor, with full explanation. "Governor Shackleton, this is Mr. Upstein—the boys call him Tango. This is Mr. Fosdick—he's known as Tex. And this is Mr. Goldberg—his nickname is Spot."

The Governor gave each of them a handshake, and the Boss continued: "These boys just called to pay their respects. They don't any of 'em want anything; but they were the best supporters you had."

The Governor addressed them with greater cordiality. "I am honored by your call, gentlemen. Won't you be seated?"

Tango, Tex and Spot started precipitately to find chairs, when the Boss intervened. "No, they hain't got much time," and he laughed significantly. "Tango, you boys pulled off a few stunts fer the Governor when he was elected, didn't you?"

"We sure did, Boss," said Tango.

"Tell us what you did as leader in your ward."

Tango looked at the Boss, then looked at the Governor, doubtfully.

"Don't be afraid," said the Boss, in sarcastic vein. "The Governor is our friend, you know."

Tango, being thus assured, proceeded in bragging manner. "Well, you know how much money you give me to colonize that gang from across the river, and you never caught me knockin' down nothin' neither—spent every cent of it, an' only three of the guys got arrested, and you had them cleared the next day."

The Boss inquired, "How many did you railroad in that wasn't real voters?"

Tango responded, "Seventy-five; then you got my pals 'pinted as 'lection officers, and we had enough ringers on the outside to keep away the spotters what them pure-ballot cranks sent around, and there you are."

"That accounts for seventy-five votes, don't it?" inquired the Boss.

Tango answered with enthusiasm. "Sure! they all voted right; them ginks always stay bought. You can kiss the Book on that."

The Boss turned to Tex. "Tex, how many people did you run in down in your ward?"

"Fifty," Tex replied.

"Sure they all voted for the Governor?" queried the Boss.

"Sure thing! They ain't one o' them but what know'd he'd git croaked if he turned yellor."

The Boss, with a glance at the Governor, meditated out loud, "Let me see; that makes about one hundred and twenty-five votes we know uv." The Boss then commanded Spot, "Spot, tell the Governor how many votes *you* brought from the neighborin' States."

"Only twenty-five, Boss," Spot replied timidly, and went on with an apology, "The other fellers got the start on me—you know I wuz at some special work for you among the workers along the canal until the week before 'lection."

"Needn't apologize, Spot," said the Boss kindly. "I know you done the best you could. Your heart wuz in the right place. Anyhow, that makes about one hundred and fifty votes. Boys, you have compared figures; how much do you think you all paid out to git them one hundred and fifty voters into the city, and take care of 'em while they wuz here, pay 'em fer their votes, and then git 'em back where they belonged?"

Tango replied, "Cost you about seven thousand five hundred dollars."

The Boss calculated, "That figures about

fifty dollars apiece," and after a pause he mused, "Cheap when you think what them votes done fer the Governor?"

The Governor was looking soberly at the Boss when the Boss turned quickly to him. "Governor, what wuz your majority in the whole State?"

"One hundred and nineteen majority," answered the Governor, like a whipped child.

"Well, well, Governor, do ye git me when I tell ye these men were the best friends ye had in the 'lection?"

The Governor then arose and showed that he was ill at ease as he started to protest, "Mr. Talley——"

The Boss would not let him go on. "Excuse me a minute, Governor; I reckon these boys'll be goin'."

Tango warned the Governor. "That's right, Governor; we jest called in to say howd'y. We don't none of us want nothin'; but if there's anythin' the Boss wants give it to 'im. See!"

Tex chimed in, "That's right."

Spot agreed, "Them's my sentiments."

As soon as Tango, Tex and Spot had left the room, the Boss, with sardonic show of dignity and in mock heroics, asked quietly, "Now, Governor Shackleton, what becomes uv all your

talk about purity and your oath uv office?"

The Governor, now embarrassed, but with injured air, responded, "Mr. Talley, you know that I was not personally responsible for any corruption in the election."

A fiendish smile played over the Boss's face as he quietly reasoned, "No, but you are—what shall I say?—a sort of fence. You are the custodian of stolen goods."

"That is the curse of our election laws," quickly protested the Governor, in mingled anger and sorrow. "If it is wrong for me to hold this office as a result of your fraud that is no reason why I should do other wrongs to pay you. I cannot give back the office. There is no legal process for that; but I can, and will, use my office to improve and purify the ballot and to punish fraud and graft."

"We may find out later whether you can give the office back," said the Boss, with devilish assurance, and then he further urged his demand. "Governor, I want you to promise me that you'll use all your influence fer the election of Judge Collins fer our next Mayor, and that you'll take the stump and make speeches fer him. And jest now, in particular, I want you to appoint Jackson Commissioner of Highways. I don't want any misunderstandin', and

therefore I put it in the plainest English I know how. I—want—you—to—appoint—Jackson—Commissioner—of—Highways.”

“But, Mr. Talley, you must let me think it over,” pleaded the Governor.

The Boss’s cue was to scold again. “I’ve heard that before. If I can’t appeal to your ambition to be President of the United States, maybe you’re so good that I can fetch ye on the question of gratitude. I made you Governor uv this State, and you owe it to me to make this here appointment.”

“But I’ve taken a solemn oath of office,” the Governor replied.

“Damn the oath of office,” roared the Boss. “Come across now and talk business. You wouldn’t bite the hand that fed you?”

“The people have rights, and the people rule,” argued the Governor, as if it were any use for the hen to argue with the fox. “I am merely their representative.”

The Boss went on without mercy. “I never thought you’d come to be a sentimentalist. That’s mushy talk. The people hain’t got nothin’ to do with it. Never did have. It’s the leaders that control in politics—call ’em bosses if ye want, who cares!—and that’s the way the universe is run. Any man who believes in an

Almighty God believes in an intelligent despotism."

The Governor fought back, "We have had the rule of the few, which is tyranny; but we're coming to the rule of the many."

"The rule of the many is tyranny," retorted the Boss. "You'd better have the tyranny of a few intelligent men than the tyranny of the mob, for that means anarchy."

"We havn't yet perfected representative government," said the Governor, in his further effort to be statesmanlike, "but the people are growing more and more capable of *self-government*, and there is more need of *self-government*."

The Boss sneered. "The people are a lot of sheep; they follow the bellwether."

The simile caught the Governor's fancy, and he reasoned on. "The bellwethers have led them into brambles, and the people are becoming wise as to their own rights." Being convinced himself, the Governor's determination increased, and he concluded, "Mr. Talley, I'm sorry I can't favor you this time."

The argument had missed the mark; the Boss stuck strictly to business. "But ye're goin' t' favor me this time. I didn't wan t' tell ye this, but I've been disappointed in yer uppish ways



“DISGRACE, AND — IMPEACHMENT!”

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for some time. Now, I've got t' threaten ye. I've got the cards on ye in that woman case, and also in yer stock gamblin'. If that has t' come out t' the public it means disgrace." And then as the claws of the Boss were unmasked and venomously displayed, he slowly and deliberately drawled out the words, "You understand the word I use—disgrace, and—impeachment." With this he brought his fist down upon the desk. He then transformed his countenance from storm to simulated sunshine, as he asked in low voice, with the most pestering contempt:

"Now, do you understand how it may be possible for you to give the office back?"

The Governor was indignant. He arose slowly and in quiet tone admitted, "Mr. Talley your threat was not unexpected." And then he displayed the most fight in all his relations with the Boss. "Now, let me tell you something. My investigator has learned about your various graft methods."

"What do you mean?" queried the Boss.

The Governor charged on. "I know how you and your system levy a tax upon each contractor."

"Well, what of it?" asked the Boss, showing considerable anger.

The indictment urged against the Boss was made clearer. "The contractor makes his contribution for campaign purposes in this way, and then gets it back by special allowances."

The Boss chuckled fiendishly, as he made the interrogatory assertion. "Ye knew this before ye became Governor, didn't ye?"

"In a general way, maybe," the Governor admitted. "But I didn't realize the extent of the stealing—*stealing* is the right word. Now, you go on with your impeachment if you want to; and maybe you had better, because that will bring these facts to the public more vividly. But whether you do go on or not, the facts are going to come out, and in either case your rotten organization will be smashed."

Fordyce gathered up some papers from his desk, crossed over to the private office without appearing to notice either the Governor or the Boss and left the room, closing the door behind him;—thus there were no witnesses to hear what the Boss should then say to the Governor.

The Boss felt the time had come for another change of tactics, and so again he purred, and put in what the lawyers would call a "plea of confession and avoidance." "Governor, come down to earth, and let's have an

understanding. I may as well admit that we git contributions from various public contractors; but why shouldn't we? The State don't allow salary enough fer anybody that takes care o' public affairs—why shouldn't we collect it ourselves? Now, see here, Governor, the State has appropriated them millions o' dollars fer roads; you do the right thing and we'll let ye in on it."

The Governor's repartee might have been expected. "The right thing is to see that this money is expended for roads only."

"Nobody's goin' t' be any the wiser if ye feather yer nest," the Boss went on persuasively. "Now, appoint Jackson and let me run this business, and I can make enough out uv it so that I can afford to give you, say, a million dollars."

The Governor shook his head, by which he meant that no inducement of the kind appealed to him, but by which the Boss thought, and hoped, he meant that the price was not high enough; for the Boss had the educated belief that every man had his price; and quick as a flash he continued: "I'll make it two millions; that'll put ye easy, and with my assistance it'll give ye a pretty good call on the White House.

And there'll be other ways that I can help ye, too, on the side, if ye'll be regular."

"And I'm to be impeached if I don't do these things?" the Governor asserted, with rising inflection.

"Yes," the Boss declared hotly. "We can help one another, or it'll have t' be war between us. I want you to call off your investigator before he gits a lot o' my best friends—and your best friends, too—into trouble."

"I must keep my oath of office inviolate," the Governor said, with apparent finality.

"If you don't flag that 'uplift' twaddle, you'll make a hell of a Governor," said the Boss.

The Governor replied, "I only plead for justice."

The Boss hung his head for a moment, and then, with evident purpose of closing issues on the spot, responded, "Well, here's our program, and you can take yer choice: Appoint Jackson Commissioner o' Highways, and have fer your share o' the profits two millions o' dollars, and my word that you'll git it. Then there are the barge canal contracts; I'll see that ye git a good share o' that. Sign them bills grantin' street railway franchise on some o' the fine roads in the State; the residents along them

lines'll buy us off, and that'll make a handsome profit fer all uv us. You'll get your share o' that. Then I want ye t' call off yer investigator—your meddlesome telltale informer. Stop yer agitation fer direct primaries and let the political machinery remain in the hands o' the leaders, so we can dictate the nominations, as we've always done—your nomination for President, mind ye, among others. Another thing I must exact uv ye is that ye support my candidate fer Mayor, no matter whether it is Judge Collins or anybody else I name. Do all these things and I'll let your other legislative plans go through, and I'll see that you are recognized as a great statesman and a patriot. If ye don't do them, then it's disgrace and impeachment."

No one could tell from the Governor's countenance just what effect this long declaration of principles and purpose was having on him, and when he said, "You may now count on me to take the stump and make speeches in our municipal campaign" the Boss's face lit up, as if the horse he had picked were leading down the stretch. So he was surprised in the extreme when the Governor continued: "*But* my speeches will be *against* Judge Collins or any other man you nominate. I shall do none

of the infamous things you demand." And with a quiet gesture toward the door the Governor concluded: "Mr. Talley, I will bid you good afternoon."

The Boss slowly arose, put his hands behind his back, looked at the Governor a couple of times in a faint effort to catch his eye, which had fallen on some official papers that seemed to need perusal, walked slowly to one of the doors leading into the corridor, looked back at the Governor, and spoke in a most bewitchingly appealing voice. "Governor, we might as well be friends as enemies."

"Yes, on proper terms, I prefer it," without lifting his eyes from his work, and without a movement of body the Governor quietly responded.

"It must be on my terms," retorted the Boss, incisively, as anger spread over his countenance. "I'm the Boss of this State. I shall expect to hear from you favorably, and if not—good-bye."

He snapped his finger in emphasis and took his leave.

VIII

A NEW LINE OF BATTLE

The Governor is upheld by Fordyce Manville. A plan is worked out. The Governor sets his face firmly against corruption.

Fordyce had not taken any part in the controversy, but his presence, during all of the conversation except when the bribe was offered, had no terror for Hiram Talley. In all probability the Boss wanted Fordyce to hear his strictures on the Governor, because the Boss realized even then that he must convince Fordyce, as well as the Governor, if things were to go his way.

So when the Governor found himself alone with Fordyce no preliminary explanation was needed to make Fordyce understand him when he said: "Fordyce, if the troubles of the Presidency are as much greater as its importance I don't think I want the job,"

And for this confidence he was rewarded by the response of Fordyce. "Governor, I'm proud of you for showing your metal. You've

got a better chance to be President of the United States by smashing the Boss and his system than you have by knuckling down to him."

The Governor was evidently strengthened in his purpose by this response and by the further interchange of views. "I'm convinced that you're right, Fordyce, and I'm going to defy him."

"He isn't done with you yet," Fordyce warned. "He'll come back with some more softsoap, and some more threats. He'll go the limit to win you over; but I know he can't make you do wrong, because you are a man."

"You heard his threat of impeachment?" said the Governor.

"Yes," responded Fordyce. "And that's what you've got to bear in mind. He may go to that length; and he could crack the whip over the Assembly, and have you impeached, and maybe convicted."

"That would be humiliating." As the Governor made this admission he showed signs of trepidation.

Fordyce reassured him. "The prestige you would lose then would be more than brought back when you are vindicated by the people. Stand your ground." Fordyce arose and

started toward the Governor's desk, as if he thought still more assurance necessary.

Then the Governor got up and crossed to Fordyce, slapped his hands on Fordyce's shoulders, pushed him back slightly, and stood erect gazing at him. "Fordyce, look at me. You have been a friend of the Boss; will you tell me, on your honor, that if I break with him you will stand by me?"

"I was a friend of the Boss," Fordyce admitted, "and I would like to be yet. But until lately I was not intimate enough with politics to know his dirty ways. I believe you trust me as a man of honor, and I tell you that I will stand by you, in the right, even though the Boss should threaten to draw and quarter me."

The Governor removed his hands from Fordyce's shoulders, and extended his right hand.

"Let it come to impeachment if necessary," said Fordyce, as he heartily shook hands with the Governor. "I will take the case as your lawyer, and work day and night in your defense."

The Governor asserted: "I see no other course but to fight. The Boss not only wants to dictate all the appointments, but he pro-

poses to think for me as to whom I shall support for our next Mayor."

Fordyce replied facetiously, "The Boss's specialty is to make up people's minds for them."

"I am coming to despise the Boss even more than I do his miserable chief bagman, Judge Collins," said the Governor, growing serious. "I'm satisfied Collins is corrupt and that he would be merely a tool for the Boss if he should be elected Mayor." The fighting spirit of the Governor had been aroused. His purpose seemed more fixed than ever before.

It could not be claimed that the Governor had always been the purest; may be he had winked at political connivance. At any rate it is only fair to recall that on the night of his election, when the Boss congratulated him and felicitated the organization on the prospect of having Shackleton in the Governor's chair and Judge Collins in the Mayor's chair and said "Them reformers can't interfere," the Governor-elect smiled; and it will also be recalled that he seemed on the verge of making a human sacrifice, the sacrifice of his own daughter, as the purchase price of fame. It must be admitted, too, that the Governor had for eight months yielded practically to every demand

of the insidious Boss. He had wavered even after he felt the weight of responsibility. At times it seemed almost as if he were a straw man, held up, and kept in place, by the intuition of his daughter and the integrity of his private secretary. Not until now had he really taken a firm resolve. At first smiling and complacent, then drifting through the shadow and sunshine back and forth, he now came into the sombre atmosphere of a full realization of responsibility and duty; let us see whether he smiled again.

How many benefactors of mankind have started with their feet in the mire of politics, and struggled out when duty called—to give society the benefit of their sorrows!

An inspiration came to the Governor from the firm conviction that Fordyce Manville was his friend and would stand by him, and, further, that Fordyce was right. The Governor was about to speak when Fordyce said: "If Collins is nominated, I believe it is your duty to take the stump against him."

"Fordyce," responded the Governor, with a smile, "I believe you could be nominated for Mayor by the opposition."

"I had never dreamed of such an honor," Fordyce replied lightly.

"It is too early to say anything," said the Governor, "but just to go on record as a prophet, I believe I will nominate you now," and he slapped Fordyce on the back in playful manner.

The cause of right, and the Governor's honor, occupied the mind of Fordyce more than did the selfish question of his personal ambition. This was shown by his reply.

"If they impeach you, I may be too busy on your defence to conduct the campaign, but I would rather defend you, and be the means of having you vindicated than to have the office of Mayor."

The Governor would not give up this new plan so readily. "If I'm impeached," said he, "and you're nominated for Mayor, you stay here and take care of my trial, and I'll go home and take care of your campaign."

Further compact was interrupted by the telephone, which Fordyce answered; it was a call from the Boss, inviting the Governor to go out riding with him in his car.

Fordyce held the 'phone, awaiting the Governor's answer, which was first put in the form of a question.

"Do you think I had better do it?"

"I would," Fordyce advised. "I would humor him, but not give in."

As if again depending upon Fordyce, the Governor replied, "Very well, tell him I'll go."

"The Governor will be right over," replied Fordyce in the 'phone.

And once more the Governor started out to grapple with the Boss.



IX

RIVALS AT CLOSE RANGE

Archibald tries to play the game for the Boss with Edith as a pawn, but finds Fordyce Manville in his way. The Governor jokes with Fordyce.

Edith had not gone far. Something had drawn her back to her father's office. Was it the flame of conflict with her father, or some other flame that she, moth like, unavoidably approached? She found neither her father, nor Mr. Manville, nor anybody in the office. She looked at the papers on her father's desk—finally sat down in his chair—and started to read a magazine.

Archibald Talley sauntered in, for what purpose it did not appear, and has not yet appeared. In fact, much of what Archibald did had no purpose at all. In this way he differed from his father. But the moment he saw Miss Shackleton, what he conceived to be his occupation was laid out for him. Crossing quickly

to her he started the work. "Why, Miss Shackleton, how do you do?"

Edith started mildly and glanced up with a show of indifference. "Good afternoon, Mr. Talley. Did you want to see my father or Mr. Manville?" she inquired in a manner pointedly to suggest the answer.

Not having any particular reason ready at hand, Archibald stammered out his counterfeit excuse, "Why, yes—er—no. Well, I thought Dad might be here."

"He was here a while ago," responded Edith, agreeably.

Archibald sat down and stretched across the desk toward Edith. At this familiarity Edith pushed away slightly. Archibald drew himself still nearer and pointedly asked, "Miss Shackleton, why do you avoid me?"

It was now Edith's turn to dissemble.

"Why, Mr. Talley, I haven't avoided you."

Archibald was vexed. "Do ye think ye can fool me? I've telephoned ye a half a dozen times requesting ye to let me call, and I have written ye notes and ye've never answered."

"I have always had something else to do when you telephoned," Edith protested, "and I do not have time to answer anything like all the letters I receive."

Archibald complained, "Ye have time enough fer Mr. Manville, I notice. I don't see what ye see in him."

"Mr. Manville is a *gentleman*." The way Edith said this and emphasized "gentleman" would have fixed the attention of most men thus addressed directly upon the door.

But Archibald grew more brazen. "He's a clerk, and he'll never amount to anythin' else." And then as his manner softened he pleaded, "I wish you'd let me call and git acquainted with ye. My Dad is very anxious to do great things fer your father. Can't ye see what it'd mean if you'd be my——"

Edith could not be rude, but she was at least duly firm, as she arose and started away from Archibald. "You must excuse me, Mr. Talley."

Archibald's pride was hurt, but his determination had been greatly augmented. "So, that's what I am worth in your eyes? I won't give up. Look here, Edith——"

Edith fairly shuddered, and turned away from Archibald's hateful gaze, while he, more and more unmindful of the amenities of courtship, urged, "Yes, I *will* call ye Edith, and I will show ye that I'm not such a bad fellow as ye think." Then he crossed boldly toward

Edith as if he would take hold of her.

At this Edith seemed a little frightened, and still more angry. "Mr. Talley, please excuse me," and she started for the door leading to the corridor.

Edith, while generally equal to emergencies, felt at this time most uncomfortable. She remembered the *late unpleasantness* with her father—could not fail to connect this unexpected call from Archibald with the plan of campaign which had at first seemed to occupy her father's mind, and so she felt unequal to the contest. If it had been only Edith's interests, what she might have said and done to Archibald for his effrontery would probably be limited only by the proprieties. She was therefore relieved beyond measure when she heard before she saw the salutations of Fordyce.

His kindest tone arrested her attention. "Good afternoon, Miss Shackleton," as if he had not left her but a short while before; and still mindful of formality Fordyce turned to Archibald, "Can I do anything for you?"

Edith having turned about and saluted Fordyce with a smile, looked at Archibald, as if to suggest a banter.

Archibald replied to Fordyce, in conclusion, "I am looking for my Dad."

Fordyce seemed to realize what had happened and was glad of the opportunity to make a jest of Archibald, even with a cheap play of words. "Your father just went out a while ago *looking for something*—I think *he is looking for trouble*." Then he smiled and gave Archibald a significant glance.

Edith walked over toward Fordyce, meeting Archibald on his way to the door.

Archibald gave Fordyce a hard look, and then feigning a cheerful smile toward Edith, as if to ignore Fordyce, said "Good-bye, Miss Shackleton," and went his way.

Fordyce crossed to his desk and indicated a seat. "I'm glad you came in. Won't you sit down?"

Edith obediently sat down, inquiring, "Where is my father?"

"The Governor went for a drive with Mr. Talley. They'll be back soon," and then his mind and eyes wandered, but after an ominous pause Fordyce ventured timidly, "Miss Shackleton, you're almost as unapproachable as a queen."

"Oh, nonsense!" Edith exclaimed.

"Well, being the First Lady of the State

certainly has kept you busy," said Fordyce, and mustering more courage, "I seldom have a chance to talk with you alone."

Edith naively led him on. "I didn't suppose you cared to talk with me alone."

"Yes, I have something I want to tell you. You know I'm not just a clerk by nature——" and Fordyce choked up. He could not finish. He gave a silly embarrassed smile, and while off his guard bragged, "I really expect to amount to something."

Edith complacently agreed. "Oh, yes, of course."

Fordyce being thus encouraged, found his ready speech again, but not exactly to the point. "I had a pretty good law practice, but the political bug got into my brain and burrowed all through it and left me sort of addled. Anyhow, I gave up my practice to come here and be your father's secretary. The Boss wanted me to."

"The Boss?" Edith quickly inquired, at the same time showing signs of disappointment. "I didn't know you thought so much of him. I don't like him very well."

Fordyce confessed. "Well, I would have done anything for him. But I have changed

my mind; I don't think he is fair about some things."

Edith's eyes flashed satisfaction. This was the sort of political talk she wanted to hear from Fordyce; but he was through with that. He had become sufficiently composed to proceed on the preferred subject. He went on, "But that wasn't what I wanted to talk to you about."

"What was it, Mr. Manville?" Edith was not quite conscious that her questions and suggestions were the very fuel needed to feed the flame which her own self had kindled in Fordyce. There was no coquetry about her. Her manner was ingenuous, but the effect on Fordyce was to fan the fire; it made his task—pleasant duty—the easier. He had grown almost bold as he said, "Well, you know——" and then the lump came in his throat again. But he must out with it. "I was about to call you Edith—I wish I might."

"Well, do it—I don't care," said Edith, more girlish than ever. "Lots of people call me Edith."

"But I don't mean that way. I want—what I want—well—well, would you be much offended if I told you——?"

"You aren't going to offend me, are you? I

know you wouldn't do that, Mr. Manville."

Fordyce felt that he was making progress. "No, not if I could help it. But I could ask you if you would be offended if I told you I love you."

Can any lover record truly that his first efforts to make *his* soul understood to *her* soul were uninterrupted? Then Fordyce Manville may be consoled.

Archibald had quietly intruded himself, so that neither Fordyce nor Edith observed him; and he came on the scene just in time to hear Edith say, "Oh, Mr. Manville, don't say that, because——"

And she laid her hands on the desk and looked down.

Fordyce seized Edith's hand, arose and went on, "But I had to say it, Edith. I do love you. You aren't offended?"

"No, not offended, but," said Edith, agreeably, as she arose and withdrew her hand, "you must let me go, I can't tell you now. Some other——"

Archibald's patience had reached its limit. He crossed half way to Edith—her attention was attracted. "I was just about to go," said she, as she started for the door.

Archibald barricaded the passage.

“YOU MUST LET ME GO. I CAN’T TELL YOU NOW. SOME OTHER . . .”



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What Edith said and the manner of saying it would have cleared away the obstruction had that obstruction consisted of Fordyce Manville or some other person like him, not so with Archibald. He stood gazing at her in cynical rebuke. She sallied forth, this time with more determined purpose, again starting toward the door and saying at the same time, "You will excuse me."

Archibald stood aside—turned about and followed Edith with his eyes until she had passed out, and closed the door. Then, with imperious mien he gave his deliberate warning:

"Fordyce, you're playin' a damn dangerous game."

"If you've anything to say to me say it like a man," demanded Fordyce as he sat down.

Archibald boasted, "From the way you're actin' I guess you'd better begin to pack up your things."

"What do you mean?" sharply queried Fordyce.

Archibald sat down, leaned over toward Fordyce, pointed his finger at him and said, in a most important manner, "If you think you can influence the Governor to give my Dad

the double-cross and at the same time cut me out with the Governor's daughter, you've—well, you've got a swelled head, that's all. My Dad made you secretary to the Governor, and he can unmake ye, too."

Fordyce answered facetiously. "Well, really, that wouldn't be such a disappointment. I would be better off if I were back in my law practice, and the Boss might do me a great favor by sending me back—if he can."

"I'm not so sure you'd have so many clients, either," snapped Archibald threateningly, and then in braggadocio tone and manner, "As long as my Dad's at the head o 'the system we can send along a good many underground messages. I expect the best thing fer you to do is to go back to the ranch in Montana and be a cowboy again."

Fordyce ventured the suggestive query, "So you think I wouldn't have much of an occupation as a lawyer?"

"You won't have any clients," Archibald assured him.

"If what you say is true the invisible government headed by your father is rather formidable."

"You'll find it so," again Archibald spoke as one in authority.

"Well, see here, *Archibald*." Fordyce's effort at ridicule by his manner of saying "Archibald" at this point was not lost. Archibald flinched, but Fordyce went on with his quiet, significant warning, "If I go back to my practice and if I don't have any clients I'll put my time in gathering facts about your invisible graft government and lay these facts before the District Attorney. This will at least occupy my time."

Fordyce had succeeded in drawing the fire of anger from his antagonist, and listened with derision to Archibald's further warning, "If ye go to interferin' with my Dad's business we'll put ye where your Sunday school ideas won't count."

Fordyce followed up his advantage by asking, "Are you joking, or are you a fool?"

Archibald jumped to his feet. "I ain't jokin' and if ye think I'm a fool jest vex me a little further and ye may be waited on by some friends o' mine."

Fordyce calmly inquired, "How far do I need to vex you? Must I repeat that you are a silly ass and a little fool?"

Archibald drew his fist as if to strike, but Fordyce did not even make a motion to parry the blow, but laughed disdainfully in the face

of his would-be assailant. "You're too much of a coward to strike me."

Archibald changed his mood, backed off toward the door leading to the corridor, pointing his finger and admonishing Fordyce, "I warn you—let Miss Shackleton alone. Don't interfere."

Fordyce was not much given to facetiousness. He was usually quite to the point, especially in business matters, and Archibald seemed to regard this as a business matter. But even Fordyce Manville could not resist the temptation to tease Archibald on such a serious occasion. Laughing derisively he asked "What has become of your fiancee that you introduced on election night?"

Archibald's rage had reached white heat. He fairly shouted, "Keep yer tongue out of my affairs. You've gone jest one step too far. I'll show you," and as he went out he slammed the door with all his might.

After Archibald had gone, the Governor returned and noticed Fordyce's manner. "Hello, Fordyce. You look excited. What's the matter?" and walked slowly to his desk.

Fordyce smiled indifferently and replied, "Archibald was just in. He has an idea that I'm meddling with certain things and threat-

ened all sorts of dire punishment. He thinks I'm influencing you against the Boss."

The Governor surprised Fordyce with his enigmatical response. "Well, you are. Archibald is dead right about it. Fordyce, I'm going to tell you something."

Fordyce rose, crossed to the middle of the room. "Well, Governor?"

The Governor's manner appeared more serious as he continued, "If it hadn't been for you the Boss and I might be friends today."

Fordyce was nonplussed. He had believed the Governor sincere in his determination to fight the Boss and his system. "Well, Governor, if I've been in your way I'm——" Then he hesitated, turned about, started to cross toward his own desk, again faced the Governor, and announced sorrowfully, "Governor, I'll write out my resignation."

The Governor lifted his hand commandingly, arose, crossed deliberately to Fordyce, looked him straight in the eye and said, in almost solemn tones, "My boy, I'm not entering a complaint. I'm making a confession. I mean that if it had not been for your moral support I fear I should have yielded to the infamous graft requirements of the Boss." His face lit

up with a half smile, and he slapped Fordyce on the shoulder. "Now resign, if you dare. I want you, my boy. I want you to stay by me." He then extended his right hand, which Fordyce took, while responding to the Governor's smile.

Fordyce had not suspected the playfulness, and even after he knew, he did not think of the motive back of it. The Governor had decided upon this little practical joke as a mild test. Fordyce wouldn't have resented it, even if he had detected it, because he was willing to be tested. "You evidently didn't take the auto ride," Fordyce ventured. "Did you break with the Boss?"

The expected response came. "Yes, and with your support I will fight him to the last ditch."

They were interrupted by a telephone call, which turned out to be from the Attorney General requesting a conference with the Governor.

The Governor had just come in to get some papers evidently, for he had not even removed his hat; so he told Fordyce to tell the Secretary of State that he would drop into his office in a few minutes. As he went out Fordyce gave this pretty compliment: "Governor, it is

a pleasure to fight shoulder to shoulder with a man."

After the Governor had gone Fordyce went into the private office, probably for the real purpose of attending to his daily work, possibly to think things over.



X

A RASH PLAN

John Gilmore, having graduated to office boy for the Governor, and thrown off his nickname, "Cap," sympathizes with Ruth, who again appears. A plot against the Boss is worked out, and Ruth opens the eyes of Fordyce.

John came whistling and prancing into the executive chamber; then suddenly realizing his dignity, braced up, turned to the door and beckoned: "Come in, Miss Woodstock."

Ruth was dressed becomingly in a cheap but neat gown, and wore a sad smile.

"Take this seat, Miss Woodstock," said John with deferential politeness, as he indicated a chair by Fordyce's desk. "Mr. Manville will be in soon."

Ruth fumbled in her portmanteau and took out a card which she handed to John, "Here, Cap."

John started to reach for the card, jumped, then backed up with injured air. "Don't call

me Cap, Miss Woodstock. I'm done with that."

"Oh, yes, I forgot," admitted Ruth. "They called you Cap. Your name is—let me see."

"My name is John. Don't you remember, I told you that?"

"Yes, I remember."

"I'll never take another position where they give a feller a number or a name like that."

"How did you get this position?" Ruth inquired.

"Got it through Mr. Manville. He's goin' to make a man of me."

"That's good," said Ruth, growing a little impatient.

"You've helped do it, too," John urged cheerfully. "You know the way you lectured me about graft?"

Ruth being thus flattered responded more patiently, with a simple "Yes."

"Mr. Manville done the same thing," said John. "He says 'honesty's the best policy.' He says the only kind of men that's worth while is the kind you could leave uncounted money with; and that's the kind of a man I'm going to be."

"Splendid, John, splendid! Your mother will be proud of you."

“My mother is proud of me now, and I won’t have to support her much longer. She inherited twenty thousand dollars from an uncle and will get it in two or three months.”

“Isn’t that fine?” exclaimed Ruth.

John felt somehow that he could open up his soul to Ruth; she must know his secrets. She must know his mother’s good fortune and intentions toward him. “She’s going to start me in a candy store. I’ve a friend who makes five thousand dollars a year in the candy business, and he only invested two thousand dollars.”

“Well, I am certainly glad to hear of your good fortune,” responded Ruth with genuine appreciation and enthusiasm.

“Really, Miss Woodstock, are you?” John asked as quick as a flash, and then went cross-lots to the goal. “You know I got stuck on you when I saw the way Archibald treated you. I know what a mean man he is. Would you be proud of me too, like my mother?”

“Why, of course, John,” said Ruth, a little embarrassed.

“Well, but I mean——” continued John. “You know, I never cared much for girls until I saw you. But I just wanted to tell you about this, and I hoped you would be inter-

ested, because I sympathized with you, and that sympathy, maybe, and your pretty face made me love you."

Ruth weakly protested. "But, John, you must not say that, and besides——"

John would not let her finish. "Besides what? Can't a feller love a girl?"

Ruth felt that she must be frank with John. She respected his earnestness. In fact, Ruth was always frank and honest, as the light was given to her to be honest. "But, John, you know what I was to Archibald."

John quickly replied, and then in a sentence he unwittingly assailed the great injustice of social inequality between sexes. "That is the only difference. You don't know what I have been. I know that you're a good girl. I'd do anything for you, anything you could name. Try me. When I get started in business will you be my wife?"

Ruth was visibly moved by John's broad-minded fairness. The very plea she had so often made to herself for herself she now heard uttered by the man who claimed to love her. What woman would not be moved by that kind of sympathy—sympathy that appeals to the one in need of it as rational, sensible, curative? What more natural than that she should add

her plea in her own behalf? "John, don't say that now. But really, John, I always meant to be a good girl. I'm just the same as Archibald's widow. We were really married by what is called the common law. A lawyer told my mother that, and said I could sue Archibald for support, but I wouldn't have his money—I would not take a cent from him. I even gave back his jewelry. I've had a hard struggle to make a living, because every place I would go to work, somehow they would find out. I think Archibald got the word to them. But I've managed to get along honestly. You make me very happy when you say you have faith in me, John."

John was affected. His pity had reached the full culmination of love. He started to say something, but Ruth had a quick inspiration.

She must test him. She had heard alleged sympathetic words before. She had yielded too quickly on another occasion. She no longer expected the prince to appear and her admiration for men of affairs had become almost non-existent. Thousands and thousands of times, it seemed to her, she had declared to herself that the next man who protested his interest in her must prove his worth. It was perhaps this warding off, even, more than her unfor-

tunate, unholy alliance with Archibald, that had held men aloof from her, and probably nothing but the innocent, untutored politeness of John could have reached her inner consciousness, even now. It was natural, therefore, that she should bring herself up with a sharp turn when she felt she had come too nearly under John's spell.

She would test him, and what better and more useful test than that he should help her in the very mission that had brought her to the Capitol. All this flashed through her mind before John had time to speak, and so she went on, "You would do anything for me? Will you help me get even with Archibald and his father for the great wrong they did?"

John felt equal to the occasion and eager for the trial. "Yes, anything, if you'll be mine."

Ruth encouraged him, but indulged in still more frankness and still greater firmness. "Let me answer that later. I must have proof before I will trust any man again. Listen: The Boss has hard work to get office boys. If you go to him again and apologize and beg him to take you back he'd do it. I still have your uniform for you. You know the Boss is going to try to have the Governor impeached."

John's look and manner showed that he was

now under Ruth's control, as he said, "Yes, I know that."

Ruth also knew that John would serve her faithfully and she loved him for it, as she hurried on with her explanation. "I'll show you how to get the evidence of what is going on in his office by use of the dictograph and moving-picture camera. I'll teach you how to work them, and in that way we can save the Governor from impeachment, and keep Archibald from bothering the Governor's daughter; and we can humiliate and punish Archibald and his father for the wrongs they have done me, and for their crimes in politics.

John was jubilant, and he gave his word. "That's dandy. I'll try it, and if we succeed you'll be my candy kid partner?" And before Ruth could prevent it—if indeed she wanted to—John embraced and kissed her.

"Now you must get Mr. Manville for me," said Ruth, as she appeared somewhat flustered, but still in command of her emotions. She again extended her card to John and with a sweet, appealing smile, said, "Give him the card, because he may not remember me. I never met him but that one night of election in Mr. Talley's office."

John took the card, and tenderly responded.

"Yes, Ruth, I'll see if he's busy." He crossed to the door leading to the private office, stopped, turned around, facing Ruth. "I'll get that job with the Boss if I have to fall out with the Governor to do it. I'll tell the Boss I'd rather work for him." As he said this a thought came into his mind which only Ruth could put out. He walked across to her and made his appeal. "It isn't wicked for detectives to tell stories to catch criminals, is it Ruth?"

Ruth replied without hesitation, "In this case, John, the good end will justify any means. At least I will forgive you for anything you do," and she sealed the compact with a voluntary kiss. Then she quickly stepped back and admonished her new-found pal, "Now we must win. But hurry, John."

John went happily on his mission.

Ruth was the first to speak as Fordyce came in.

He bowed and indicated a seat by his desk as he crossed the room.

Ruth walked lightly across to the desk and as she sat down spoke softly, "Mr. Manville, I know something that you ought to know. Maybe I can help you, and you can help me."

Fordyce sat and looked at her a moment. "What is it, Miss Woodstock?"

"The Boss and his system are trying to frame up the Governor, and I know you believe in fair play," said Ruth.

Fordyce inquired, "What do you know about it?"

Ruth replied, "I've made it my business to know a lot about it. Excuse me for telling you my troubles—but Archibald was engaged to me—and—under promise of marriage he—wronged me."

"I'm sorry," said Fordyce sadly.

Ruth's manner and speech became highly impassioned as she went on, "and then threw me over; and to avert disgrace from my family I was led to commit a crime—the one crime that mother-instinct most abhors. We were good friends until the night of election. That was when he deserted me; and it was all because he met and fell in love with the Governor's daughter."

Fordyce winced. "With the Gov——?"

Ruth did not hesitate. "Yes, he swore he was going to marry her—and I know she doesn't love him—she loves you, but you must not ask me how I know. I know a lot about those people. I set out to get even with them.

Maybe it's wrong to feel revenge, but I can't help it." Ruth was now sobbing hysterically. She took out a handkerchief, wiped away her tears, and sobbed on. "When a brute of a man ruins a girl I can't help it." And then with great effort somewhat recovered her composure.

Fordyce showed genuine sympathy, as he said, "There, Miss Woodstock, control yourself. Tell me what you think should be done."

"I came here to tell you what I had found out," said Ruth, more calmly, as she took a manuscript from her portmanteau and handed it to Fordyce. "I have written it all down. Here's a report of a lot of things I have found out about how the Boss and his henchmen run things. But even then I didn't know it was quite so bad till I got here. I was looking around the corridors to find the Governor's office, when I saw Archibald—he didn't see me, so I dodged behind a pillar—and heard him tell three gunmen—they call them politicians—that his Dad and the Governor had broken, and that the Governor was going to be impeached. And Archibald told the gunmen that he wanted them to fix you, so you'd let the Governor's daughter alone."

Fordyce's action was no doubt more judicial

than his feelings as he inquired, "You say you want to help the Governor and me?"

Ruth responded quickly. "Yes. I'd do anything. I'd lie; I'd steal; I'd commit murder, to get even with that devil."

"Have you any plan?" inquired Fordyce.

"Yes, I think I know a plan that would show what they are doing in the Boss's office—that's where the deviltry is all concocted."

"What is your plan?"

Ruth arose, stepped back and in respectful but doubting tone exclaimed, "Mr. Manville, I trust you—as much as I'd trust any man—but—but—pardon me—I'll never entirely trust *any* man again—not even you."

Fordyce replied with a smile. "Well, that's all right, Miss Woodstock. You work along your own lines, and if I can be of any help to you I shall be glad to do it, and I shall thank you for any help you can give to the Governor and me." This respect for her wish had an effect which could not have been produced by any argument. Ruth immediately changed her purpose. "I think I *will* tell you, Mr. Manville—I know I can trust you in this—our interests are mutual. John wants to help me. He's going to try to get his job back in the Boss's office."

"And then what?" queried Fordyce.

Ruth went on enthusiastically, "He's going to use the recording dictograph invented by K. M. Turner; it is the newest thing—it records the voice itself."

"Yes, I know. It is a marvelous invention," Fordyce agreed.

"Then I'm going to teach him how to use my moving-picture camera," continued Ruth.

"That makes a noise," Fordyce protested. "How can you overcome that?"

"I have a plan," Ruth replied with confidence.

"I've been told," said Fordyce, "there are only a few women in the world who can operate a moving-picture camera."

"That's true," Ruth admitted, "but I'm fortunate enough to be one of them, and I can teach John. I will be careful; and if I do not help the cause of the Governor I'll not hurt him."

Fordyce now had confidence. "For that I'll trust the intuition and ingenuity of the woman."

Ruth then admonished Fordyce. "So if John wants to leave his position here you'll understand why."

"I see," said Fordyce as he seemed to ac-

quiesce. He started to hand the manuscript back to Ruth.

"Thank you, Mr. Manville. You may keep the paper," said Ruth. "You will hear from me again."

"Thank you, Miss Woodstock."

Ruth shook hands with Fordyce and they exchanged friendly salutations as Ruth started on her further mission.

John, who had been doing some justifiable eavesdropping, merely for the purpose of noting the end of the interview, came in from the private office, smiled at Ruth, asked Fordyce to excuse him a moment, and escorted Ruth out of the office.

Fordyce again went into the private office, leaving the Governor's main office unoccupied.

XI

THE COWBOY'S COURAGE

Archibald calls upon Fordyce to extract a promise; brings some "friends" along. The Maxim Silencer plays its role.

Archibald came back, as he had threatened, "to show" Fordyce, leaving the door open as he entered until he made sure of the situation; Archibald then beckoned down the corridor and was promptly obeyed by the appearance of Tango, Tex and Spot. Putting his fingers to his lips to indicate silence, he motioned Spot to close the door, which was done promptly. "Now, boys, don't forget. Go clean through with this if necessary, but watch me for your signals."

Tango replied with vehemence, "All hell can't stop us when you say the word."

Spot followed with assurance, in inadvertently loud voice, "If you say die, he's a dead cock."

Spot's vigorous language touched the sense

of caution in Tex, who fairly shivered and looked about him nervously, exclaiming in husky, suppressed whisper, "Not so loud! Not so loud!"

Tango replied, "Say, Tex, if you don't git some courage we'll fire you out of the fraternity. What if somebody does hear us talkin'? Couldn't we protect ourselves?"

Spot, then coming to the support of Tango, scolded, "Tex, if I couldn't stand the gaff I'd stop totin' a gun and go to work at somethin'."

Archibald showed himself to possess almost the masterful mind of his Dad for handling henchmen. "You ain't afraid, are ye, Tex?"

Tex replied vigorously, "Naw; I'll croak any wop that'd accuse me uv it."

"You have fixed a few, ain't you?" said Archibald, encouragingly.

Archibald had accomplished his purpose—that of sidetracking Tex's feeling of fear and getting him into a reminiscent mood as to his "past performances."

The war dance could not more surely indicate the gloating happiness over scalps taken and palefaces slaughtered than Tex's manner indicated his pleasure in recalling what to him were daring deeds. "Say, Archibald, do

you remember them social settlement guys what started to clean us out two years ago, and when the Boss sent fer me and a pal and cut out our work fer us? The coroner—a friend of your dad—reported next day that one uv 'em was struck by a street car, and the other'n' fell down an elevator shaft. Ha! ha! that was one of the smoothest ones I ever put over."

Then Tango, in further encouragement, said, as he slapped Tex on the back, "Tex, you're coming back to yourself agin. I've been worryin' about you, but now I'd stack you up agin the best uv 'em."

Spot shot forth in dangerous reminiscence, but he had aimed aright, the effect was to the purpose. "When Tex pulled that one off it was before the District Attorney and so many policemen wuz tryin' to make a rep by juggin' gentlemen like us. It wuz before that big shootin' scrape, when one o' the high police officials and four of our best pals wuz sentenced to the death-house. Say, Tex, would your nerve be good fer it now?"

Tango didn't wait for Tex to answer, but said, "Course it would; Tex ain't afeerd."

Archibald, again imitating his father's method, decided that he had better "throw a

scare" and so he spoke as one of authority. "Well, you boys may have a chance to show what kind of stuff ye are made uv, and if it comes to the scratch, I don't want any of ye to weaken. because if you do you've got more to fear from me and my dad on account of what we know about ye, than from any of the judges, for anything you might do here, because if ye go straight my dad'll get ye tried before the right court, and he'll tell the judge what to do."

Tango, a little piqued, said to Archibald, "Ye ain't got nothin' on me."

Archibald replied, significantly, "I ain't saying we have or we hain't, but ye know we could frame ye and give ye a free ticket."

"Yes, I suppose ye could," Tango admitted, meekly, and then with show of courage continued, "We'll none of us ever go back on you. Lead us to the work."

The quarry came to the hunter. Fordyce was the quarry. He never appeared more stately than as he walked from the private office across to his desk, perusing a law book. He seemed not to notice the presence of Archibald or of the "Three." As he sat at the desk he said, without looking up, "Will you gentlemen be seated?"

He then lifted his eyes and gesticulated toward Tango, Tex and Spot; and then, more mischievously, Fordyce looked Archibald over and said, "And you, too, Archibald."

Archibald felt sure of his position. He was in command of the larger of the two armies, as he thought. The battle seemed to him already won. He would surely reach a satisfactory understanding with Fordyce Manville now.

Archibald walked slowly to Fordyce's desk and with an air of confidence asked Fordyce, "Have you made up your mind to quit meddlin' with my dad's affairs and to let Miss Shackleton alone?"

Tango, Tex and Spot crossed to a point just behind Archibald.

Fordyce dropped his pen, glanced up at Archibald, and calmly observed, "I've made up my mind not to let you interfere with my affairs. Do you understand?"

Archibald put his thumbs in vest armholes, straightened up and proceeded importunately, "Well, I happen to have a few friends with me and I just waited on ye to ask ye to promise that ye'll quit meddling with my dad's affairs and that ye'll let Miss Shackleton alone. Do ye git me?"

The gangsters nervously shifted and seemed anxious for trouble.

Fordyce, with show of contempt, made the decisive response, "You thought you needed some help, did you? Well, I guess you're about right." And then he arose, and continued: "I know who your friends are. They pose as politicians, but they're just common, cowardly gunmen—that's what they are."

The gunmen involuntarily put their right hands on their hip pockets.

Fordyce, with a sweeping gesture toward the gunmen, as he looked at Archibald, went on, "And you're no better than your associates."

Archibald, with cynical air, "Ye think ye're pretty smart with a gun yerself, don't ye? Suppose ye git one out?"

Fordyce replied, "I don't keep one around here. Don't you think you had better see your friends home? I don't need a gun."

"Well, mebbly ye do," said Archibald, and turned to Tango, and making a grand salaam to Fordyce, said, "Tango, loan the gentleman your gun."

Tango took out his gun and laid it on the desk in front of Fordyce, then crossed the

room, so as to have Tex and Spot between him and Fordyce.

At the same time Archibald crossed to the Governor's desk, so as to be shielded by the three gunmen.

Tex and Spot held their right hands on their hip pockets.

"Now, Mr. Manville," said Archibald, "if ye think ye're handy with the gun, cut loose. Yer reputation in Montana don't go here. Ye got to make good—unless ye want to make me a promise that ye'll quit meddlin' in my dad's affairs and let Miss Shackleton alone."

Fordyce looked at the gun and spoke to Archibald reassuringly, and with apparent respect. "Mr. Talley, I don't want any trouble here and I'm not going to try to shoot any of you, so don't be afraid. This is a dandy gun," continued Fordyce, nonchalantly, as he picked up the gun.

"Yes, and it has on a Maxim silencer, too," boasted Archibald.

Fordyce smiled, and feigned innocence. "Had to be made special, didn't it? The Maxim silencer won't work on ordinary guns."

"It works on our guns all right," said Archibald, with evident feeling of security, "and if one of these boys kills his man nobody can

hear it and he can make a sure getaway."

As Fordyce pulled off the silencer and put it back on, he asked, sarcastically, "That wouldn't take much bravery, would it?"

Archibald, feeling confident that his bluff had worked, bragged on, "A little more'n you got. I know'd ye wuz a coward when it comes right down to it."

Fordyce replied calmly, "No, you're wrong again. You generally are."

"I bet ye couldn't hit a barn door," was Archibald's retort.

"Yes, I could shoot straight if I wanted to," said Fordyce, and then added, "Don't you think you had better see your friends home?"

Archibald took from his pocket a gold cigarette case, removed a cigarette and tapped the end on the case, as he let out a guffaw of laughter and continued to nag Fordyce. "You're a regular blowhard. They'd git ye before ye'd say jack-rabbit."

Quick as a flash Fordyce made a throw shot. The bullet pierced the center of Archibald's cigarette case and as it dropped to the floor Archibald fairly quaked with fear. He looked at Tango, Tex and Spot quizzically; they, too, were dazed and bewildered and showed utter confusion and panic.

Spot was backing off toward the door leading to the corridor without taking his eye off of Fordyce. He fumbled until he found the door knob behind him, opened the door and made a precipitate exit backwards.

As Tango and Tex were starting for the door Archibald rushed out, using them as a shield. Tango and Tex then made their escape in equally unceremonious and undignified manner.

Fordyce laughed heartily, laid the gun on the desk and started to walk across to the Governor's desk, when the Governor and Edith came in from the private office, followed closely by John.

The Boss and Judge Collins came rushing in from the corridor, through the other door from the one which had just been used as a hurried exit.

The Boss called out excitedly, "What's the matter? Where's my son?"

Fordyce replied as calmly as if nothing unusual had happened, "Went to see his friends home," then stooped and picked up the cigarette case, turned it over a time or two, as if noting his target score, passed the cigarette case to the Boss, and with extreme politeness said, "For Archibald, with my compliments."



PART THREE

(XII to XX inclusive.)

Eleven months have elapsed since the night of Governor Shackleton's election. The scene has shifted back to the apartment of the Boss, and the banquet hall off where officials and workers are feasting.



XII

THE TRAP

John and Ruth complete their plan to secure evidence.

It was a crucial night in the affairs of the Boss—the night before the impeachment vote was scheduled in the Assembly. Through the weary three months since the Boss had first threatened the impeachment of the Governor in the executive chamber at the Capitol, the Boss had worked in his own mysterious way to bring the Governor around. He had never been quite discouraged, had hoped on and worked on; and yet within his heart he feared the issue.

The Boss did much of his work with “rubber shoes,” but at times he also played most boldly in the open. Before this final night the ma-

chinery had been put in good order. The Assemblymen had been rounded up. Some of them believed as the Boss pretended to believe, and could be counted on to vote for impeachment on *merit*; some had been *fixed* because of their interest in contracts or by the mere promise of the Boss to look out for their political futures, or by his flattery, or by his threats of exposure on account of their shady records.

So much had been said in the newspapers, however, that the Boss feared some of his adherents would change their views and vote against impeachment, or find it convenient to be absent from the session. The assurance of a bare two-thirds vote was not what the Boss would call success in advance, so he had arranged, and was having, at his own liberal expense, a banquet in the sumptuous banquet hall adjoining his own private apartments in the Cafe de Riche. This was for the two-fold purpose of inspiring confidence by the open manner of his claims and of bringing particular pressure upon a few doubtful assemblymen, so as to make the count sufficient to overtop any seventh-day repentances.

To give tone to his public confidence he had invited the Governor himself to make a speech. This last move was considered by his son and

by his chief bagman, Judge Collins, rather a dangerous proceeding. They feared that the oratory of the Governor heard by some of the Assemblymen and read of in the next morning's papers by others would have a damaging effect on the Boss's plan.

The Boss was not a psychologist, that he knew of, but his knowledge of human nature—particularly the human nature of public crib feeders—rarely led him astray. At any rate, no performance could have been better staged for immediate purpose than the performance of this night, consisting of a banquet and royal audiences.

If man could both propose and dispose, the Boss's plan would surely carry; but genius must always be pitted against genius, and invention against invention. Progress becomes a paradox. No sooner is armor plate made impenetrable than improved ordnance is invented to penetrate it. And when criminals master the art of known means of detection, other and unknown means of detection are devised.

Whether pessimists are correct in thinking there can be no progress because genius smiles no less upon the righteous than upon the diabolical, or optimists in believing that the conflict between right and wrong is a natural

process of evolution, which is tending toward a perfect day, it is clear that political trickery and dishonesty have a struggle that grows more and more difficult as the people become more and more determined to take care of their own affairs.

So while the Boss was planning the downfall of the Governor, two insignificant little creatures, each with a grievance, were planning the downfall of the Boss.

John had succeeded in getting back his job in Mr. Hiram Talley's office, and Ruth had not been disappointed in the docility and aptness of John as a student of the dictograph and moving-picture camera. They had worked together, and had finally planned what they believed to be a successful campaign.

It was not altogether due to the long arm of coincidence that the same night selected by the Boss for his final battle was also selected by Ruth and John for theirs. John knew in advance of the banquet, and knew that the Governor and Fordyce Manville were to be asked to speak, and that the Boss and Archibald intended to have present certain doubtful assemblymen and interview them. He knew of these things because he overheard the Boss and Archibald and Judge Collins in their confer-

ences. He made it his business to overhear. That's what he was there for. Of course whatever John knew Ruth also knew.

Ample opportunity was afforded to wire up the recording dictograph in advance, and to leave nothing but quick work in planting the dictograph transmitter in the office of the Boss; and to connect up the recording device in a closet in the hall; for John had a key to the office, and could have the work done at night. These preliminary plans were easily concealed by a little clever work—removing a little wall paper and inserting the base receptacles for the connection of the dictograph receiver in the Boss's office and for the recording device in the closet in the hall outside, and then replacing the wall paper until the time for use.

The greater difficulty was in using the moving-picture camera on account of the noise it would make. Ruth believed that the camera and the Neostyle sounded enough alike so that her plan would work, and as both of them knew that the Boss was prolific in sending out circulars, they hoped he would mistake the sound of the camera for that of the Neostyle.

The banquet was well along. John stood at the small table in the Boss's room running off letters. The Boss and Archibald had just

come in from the banquet hall. The Boss asked, "Cap," as the Boss continued to call John, "what did ye bring that machine in here fer?"

"It's too hot in the other room," John responded.

"Well, I guess ye can stand it. Leave that window open," commanded the Boss, kindly.

John removed the Neostyle to the private office and closed the door, and then closed the portieres over the window.

As the Boss said, "Archie, I think we'd better show ourselves in the banquet hall jest fer a minute, and come right back," the sound of the Neostyle was heard.

Archibald acquiesced. "Yes, Dad, they'll begin to wonder why yer givin' the blowout."

To which the Boss replied, "They know it's politics, and that's enough."

As they opened the door to go into the banquet hall Fordyce Manville was just concluding his speech, "Whatever the present generation may think of the Governor, historians will write him down as an honest man and a patriot."

The door closed behind the Boss and Archibald, shutting off the sound from the hearing of John; then he knew that the coast was clear.

He came in from the private office, hurriedly crossed to the door of the banquet hall, opened it just in time to hear Judge Collins, the toastmaster, starting in on what appeared to be a long speech to offset the speech of Mr. Manville.

John felt pretty sure that the Boss and his son would listen to that speech, and it was the opportunity he had been waiting for. He closed the door, crossed quickly and opened the door leading into the main hall, and beckoned.

Ruth came in carrying her moving-picture camera and a dictograph. She set the camera down in the middle of the room.

John put his finger to his mouth, indicating silence, and turned the crank of the camera.

"I have to run off a lot of circulars on the Neostyle. Listen and see if they sound alike," and went quickly into the private office.

Ruth heard the sound of the Neostyle.

John then returned, excitedly, "Did they sound alike?"

"Yes, I told you I was sure of it. Now, John, don't forget anything I have taught you."

John then asked, "Are you sure the dictograph is wired up properly?"

It was splendid team work; what one didn't think of, the other did.

"Give me your knife, so I can make a short circuit," said Ruth.

John took his knife from his pocket and handed it over quickly.

Ruth crossed to the window, lifted the portieres, brought the knife in contact with the dictograph connection, which caused the desired spark and noise. "Now, I'll connect it up," and so saying she planted the dictograph.

"That's dandy," ejaculated John.

"Now I'll go," said Ruth, "and I'll tell the detective to stay right in the closet in the hall and turn on the recording dictograph as soon as the Boss begins to talk. Now, John, if the Boss catches you don't forget our understanding."

John reassured her, "I remember just exactly what I'm to do."

Ruth, as a matter of caution, said, "Well, to be real sure, let's rehearse it. Tell me what you're to do."

John rehearsed obediently. "If I can save the movie film and get out I'm to give it to the detective and he'll take the genuine film and dictograph records to you; and he'll give me the dummy film and records which he has,

so that if they catch me they'll think they've got the evidence."

Ruth rewarded him with her approval, "Splendid. Now I must hurry before we're caught. Good-bye, John."

"Good-bye, Ruth," echoed John. "I hope we win." And then he gently embraced and kissed Ruth.

Ruth broke away quickly, but as she left the room John's purpose was made more determined by the bewitching smile she left upon his memory.

The coup d'etat had been well timed; Ruth had just made her exit, John had taken the moving picture camera into the private office and arranged it in the window so he could turn it on the Boss's desk or Archibald's desk, as the case might require; and he had again stepped into the main room, looked about and opened the door to the banquet hall, when the cheering indicated that Judge Collins had concluded his remarks.

The Boss and Archibald came in just in time to hear the sound of the Neostyle. It was a reassurance to John when he heard the Boss say, "Cap's gittin' off the circ'lar letters on the Neostyle. I guess that noise won't bother us much."

To which Archibald responded, "The work's got to be done."

"Archie, the reason I suggested comin' in so soon I want t' interview one or two Assemblymen before the banquet's over. I guess it'll be purty late." The Boss then pushed the button on the side of his desk and sat down.

Archibald observed, "It looks like Judge Collins's goin' to call on ever'body to make a speech."

"That's politics; and that's why I give the boys this banquet," said the Boss.

As John came in, the Boss commanded, "Cap, go into the banquet hall and find Assemblyman Weeks. Tell 'im I want to see 'im—be quiet about it."

XIII

THE CONFESSION OF FEAR

Archibald becomes father-confessor to his "Dad." A plot to capture the Governor's daughter.

As John opened the door leading into the banquet hall, cheering and laughing were heard until the door closed behind him. The Boss seemed to have a premonition that all would not be well; or else he felt that a little scare would cause Archibald to exert himself more in the work to be done. He turned a steady look upon Archibald as he said, meditatively, "We've got the work uv our life cut out fer us. We mustn't fail to impeach the Governor—unless we can bring him around our way to-night. Do you realize, Archibald, how much there is at stake?"

Archibald looked sad as he replied, "I know it's serious."

The Boss and the Governor had both proved good prophets as to the Mayoralty nomina-

tions. Judge Collins had been nominated by the Boss's organization, and Fordyce Manville had been named by the opposition. The close approach of this most important issue seemed to weigh heavily upon the Boss.

"Let me tell you how serious it is. If we don't convert the Governor er impeach him—and convict 'im, too—his influence in this Mayoralty campaign 'll defeat Judge Collins and elect Fordyce Manville."

"Why did you have the Governor come here and make that speech to-night?" asked Archibald, petulantly.

"Policy, my son, policy! The only way t' win a fight like this is to show no fear. And we must crowd the impeachment an' the trial through before the 'lection, er we're liable to lose ever'thing. If we lost the 'lection before the trial wuz over I might not be able t' control the Judges and the Senators. Think what that 'd mean! With the loss of power here in the city, and with the Governor vindicated, all th' evidence again' us in collectin' campaign money and commissions from public contracts, and all our relations with the gang 'd come out. All Hell couldn't stop it."

Archibald was impressed. "That would be awful!"

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The Boss continued, "Now you see what I mean when I tell ye it's the fight uv our life. Our liberty is at stake—an' maybe our lives as well. So we *must* win."

He paused and reflected.

"Archibald, we must leave no stone unturned. I want ye to think uv ever'thing ye can."

"I'm glad ye told me this, dad. I wuz gittin' kind o' sorry fer Edith. Met 'er on the street t'-day. She looked purtier than ever—kind o' sad like; and I somehow don't like to see 'er suffer."

"My boy, don't git chicken-hearted—the Governor's got to come across right, er he's got to be impeached. His daughter's influence has been on the wrong side all the time. Mebby if she hadn't been so high and mighty she'd o' made her father see the advantage o' workin' with us."

Archibald mused, "Edith is a fine girl^{*}—the best I ever knew. She'd do anything to save—say, look here, dad, what do you think o' this?" And the inspiration made him enthusiastic.

"You're not goin' to git the Governor to come through on any political arguments—he's got the bug o' popularity in his mind—thinks he'll win by playin' to the gallery—but if we

could put it up to Edith to save him from disgrace she'd try."

"All right—what's your plan?" the Boss calmly inquired.

"Why, after you try everythin' else, let me promise Edith that if she'll marry me you'll let up on the Governor and give him his own way about everythin'."

"Ketch me surrenderin' to him!" exclaimed the Boss, with emphatic resentment.

Archibald reassured him. "You don't git my point. As quick as we're married ye can reopen on 'im. Then Edith 'll be on our side to save him and to save the two families."

"She's engaged to Fordyce Manville," the Boss protested.

"She'll break it to save her father," Archibald ventured with assurance.

"You wouldn't want to marry her?" queried the Boss.

"Sure, Dad, to help you win out," said Archibald with diabolical effrontery. "If I wuz the marryin' kind I'd rather have her than any girl I know; but I couldn't stand any one woman very long; I know it. But I'll marry her if that'll help ye win—then, as soon as it's settled, I can kick out uv it—jest a marriage uv convenience!"

“Archie, ye’ve got more sense than I thought ye had. That’s a good idea; if nothin’ else works we’ll try it, but wait ’till I give ye the signal,” and the Boss chuckled.



XIV

THE WHEREWITHAL.

Assemblymen yield to the money argument of the Boss, while the movie camera and dictograph bottle up the secrets.

John entered from the Banquet Hall and crossed quietly to the private office and started the Neostyle. As the Banquet Hall door stayed open the jolly laughter gave evidence of long tarrying with the wine. They were singing "For he's a jolly good fellow."

Assemblyman Weeks stepped into the august presence of the Boss, and closed the Banquet Hall door. The Assemblyman had on a time-honored evening dress suit and had every appearance of being sufficiently softened up for the purpose of the Boss, who arose, cordially extending his hand. "How do you do, Assemblyman? I'm glad to see you."

Archibald did his part by shaking hands with Assemblyman Weeks and assuring him "You're the kind o' man we can count on."

As Assemblyman Weeks sat down, the Boss

proceeded to prepare his frame of mind. "Assemblyman, have you made your speech yet?" the Boss inquired.

Weeks replied proudly, "Yes, Judge Collins called on me the third man after the Governor."

The Boss fawningly ventured, "Judge Collins recognizes in you a coming statesman," and then broke to a serious mood. "Assemblyman, we're havin' hard work to git enough members to attend to make the impeachment sure. Now, I want to count on you."

"Mr. Talley, I haven't given the case much thought."

"It don't need none. Leave it to me. I've looked into it," said the Boss with assurance.

"But I don't like to vote to impeach the Governor unless I know all the facts," protested Weeks.

"It'd take a year to learn all the facts," the Boss replied. "Impeach 'im, and let the facts come out at the trial."

"I'm afraid my people wouldn't re-elect me. The Governor has a good many friends in my district," Weeks pleaded.

"I'll see that you're elected again," said the Boss, patronizingly. "I don't care how much



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it costs. I need you now. When you need me, call on me."

Assemblyman Weeks wavered. "I'm afraid, Mr. Talley—" he hesitated, shook his head and repeated, "I'm afraid."

The Boss with great kindness and the assurance of good fellowship, went on, "See here, Weeks, to show you that I'm a sport—" and suiting to his words the action of taking out a roll of bills and conspicuously peeling off a couple of them, "you promise me that you'll vote in favor uv impeachment, and do what ye can to git the others to do it, an' I'll help ye git 'lected again, and here's a thousand dollars toward it right now—you know money makes the horse stand hitched. Ha! ha! ha! Good joke, eh?" With perfect confidence he handed the bills to Weeks.

The Assemblyman gave a furtive look about him.

The Boss quickly understood and gave the necessary assurance.

"Take it. There's nobody here but Archibald. You know business's business, and politics's business."

Poor Weeks tremblingly reached out his hand toward the bills.

The Boss's big, fat, soft hand, supporting a

large diamond solitaire, as he displayed it prominently, handing the two five hundred dollar bills over, formed a marked contrast with the trembling, calloused hand of the Assemblyman, as he took the money. He arose and shook hands. "You're all right, Boss. You can count on me. I'll catch an early train in the morning for the Capitol—and I'll stand hitched, too." And Weeks laughed at the joke he had copied from the Boss, as he again entered the Banquet Hall.

Thus had the Boss won another victory.

As Assemblyman Weeks opened the door to go back into the Banquet Hall a changed man, a post-prandial orator was making the welkin ring on his favorite subject, "Drainage of Swamp Lands."

"I call upon you my fellow citizens, to show your interest in the farmer; it means more farm products and will reduce the cost of—"

The door closed, relieving the Boss and Archibald of hearing any more oratory on a subject concerning which they had no need to worry. The Boss then pushed the button on the side of his desk. "Archibald, if ye learn the game right, the sky's the limit."

'As John responded, the Boss commanded, "Go in and git Assemblyman Jones."

As John went into the Banquet Hall the same speaker was again heard. "I tell you, the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting—"

The door closed behind John; and now the big padrone decided to give his son a lesson in the wicked art of invisible government. Why he should want his son to "follow in the footsteps of his dear old Dad," is difficult for a normal mind to appreciate, but he said to Archibald: "When Jones comes in, you try your hand on him, but don't go above a thousand unless I give ye the wink."

He was interrupted by a telephone call. He took up the receiver. "State Capitol?—All right. Oh—yes—five hundred?—That's the best ye can do?—You're sure he'll stick?—Says he can control one other vote besides his own—All right, give it to 'im."

John returned and again busied himself with the Neostyle in the private office.

The noise of cheering, punctuated with "What's the Matter With Jones?" "He's All Right," was just at its height as Assemblyman Jones entered the Boss's office, and closed the door. "Good evening, Boss! Did you send for me?"

The Boss arose and shook hands with him.

"Hello, Assemblyman Jones! Yes—you have already made a speech in the banquet hall, have you?"

Jones was pleased with the flattering question. "Yes, I just got through. That's what they wuz cheerin'."

"I wish you'd talk to Archibald," said the Boss.

"Archie, will you talk with Assemblyman Jones, please?"

Archibald indicated a seat by the small desk. "Won't you please sit down?"

As Jones sat down, the Boss busied himself with papers at his desk, and Archibald began his first hunt for big game. "Assemblyman, my father and I are very anxious to have the Governor impeached. We think we've got 'nough votes fer it; but we'd like to have yours; and, besides, we want you in on it—you're goin' to be a big man some day."

Jones quickly responded, "Waal, do you know, I don't believe he's guilty, by Heck!"

"Oh, yes he is! We've looked into that," Archibald assured him.

"Waal, I've been readin' the papers," persisted Jones, "and I'm afraid it wouldn't be right. You know I'm a poor man, and have

my family to support, and I don't want to git the neighbors down on me."

Archibald looked up and caught his father's smile of approval, and went on, "Our friendship's more to you than the whole district, and we'll take care uv you. How would five hundred suit you just now?"

Jones replied, "Oh, five hundred wouldn't do me much good."

Archibald again looked up at his father,—this time for a signal, which the Boss gave him by holding up both hands spread out. Archibald took it to indicate ten hundred dollars; and again he renewed his campaign. "I'll tell ye what we'll do. If we can count on ye fer yer vote, and yer influence, we'll take care uv ye at the next 'lection, and make ye a present uv a thousand dollars now. That's the very limit." And he took a roll of bills from his pocket, peeled off one bill and handed it toward Jones. "Is it a go?"

Jones reached over quickly and took hold of the bill. "I thought you wuz my friend. I'm with you to the finish. I'll hurry right back to the Capitol. Good-bye!" And without waiting for further ceremony, shook hands with Archibald.

Archibald showed himself an apt young mas-

ter and capped the climax by his familiarity with the Assemblyman. "Good-bye, old pal. Remember, we stand together."

The Assemblyman crossed and shook hands with the Boss. "Good-bye, Boss! You're the right sort!"

"And so are you, Jonesy," the Boss, in good fellowship, assured him.

Then Jones chuckled and repeated the slogan, "We stand together."

As the Banquet Hall door opened to let Assemblyman Jones back among the jolly throng, they were heard singing—"The Good Old Summer Time." The door closed.

"Why, Dad, it's easy," chuckled Archibald.

The busy Boss was again called on the telephone, this time by Assemblyman Smithfield at the Capitol; and this is the Boss's side of the conversation:

"Yes—All right.—Where are ye talkin' from?—Oh—I guess that's safe.—Sure there's nobody listenin'?—I understand ye wuz shakin' in yer boots a little on the impeachment.—No,—not in doubt, but still—I say, not in doubt exactly.—Say, Smithfield, are ye sure nobody's listenin' over the wire? Connection doesn't seem to be very clear.—All right at yer end, eh?—Well, ye know how we fix things

down here.—Go ahead.—Threatened!—From whom?—Well, haven't ye had yer eye-teeth cut yet?—If ye're in the ring, ye needn't be afraid o' him or any one else.—Yes—yes.—I told Mac to tell ye that.—Well, ye'll git it jest as soon as the vote's cast, whether he's impeached er not.—Got some bills to meet?—Well, I'll tell ye what I'll do, Smithfield. I'm in a little hurry, but don't hint it to the other boys, because this is the best we've done fer anybody. You'll git the thousand whether he's impeached er not, and I'll make ye a personal present uv five hundred more if he *is* impeached.—Yes.—Then I can count on ye?—Now cut loose and help us all ye can; this's important.—All right.—That's good. Say, Smithfield, I wish ye had come down to the banquet to-night.—Yes.—Oh, big crowd. They're in there yit.—Yes; oh, the Governor made the eagle scream, but the boys have all got his measure now.—No it won't cost us a single vote.—Well, all right.—Good-bye.”

When the conversation ended, Archibald said admiringly, “Dad, you're a wonder.”

The Boss replied, “They think I am—same thing.”

Again the wing-footed telephone carried its message from the Boss to the Capitol. This

time a certain Mr. Treadwell had called and the Boss stiffened his back bone.

"Hello!—State Capitol? Well, put 'im on.—Yes, this's Mr. Talley.—Yes, ready.—Yes, I hear ye.—Put 'im on.—Hello!—Oh, that you, Mr. Treadwell?—I see.—Well, that's what I thought. Oh,—easy,—not a bit worried.—No, I wouldn't do it.—We've fixed twenty now, and I figure we've got 'bout five more'n we need.—Oh, Crawford.—Yes, I know he talks a good deal.—He has a certain influence among some uv the farmer members.—How much does he want? Seven hundred fifty?—Guess he's gittin' purty wise.—We never give 'im more'n five hundred fer anythin'—Well, you hold 'im down t' five hundred if ye can, and if ye can't, then give 'im seven hundred fifty.—Say, Smithfield jest called me up, and I fixed him up. Don't need to go about 'im any more, jest count on 'im.—Oh, they'll be there.—Yes,—Yes.—Oh, no, don't quote me.—Uv course I expected they'd git up some sensational cry fer the last minute. No,—no.—Judge Collins'll be in as soon as he gits through presidin' at the banquet, and I'm goin' to tell him to hold the Assembly in session, beginnin' to-morrow mornin', until the Governor's impeached, if it takes forty-eight

hours.—You boys can sleep afterwards;—you can sleep easy then, too.—All right.—Good-bye.”

Tango entered from the Banquet Hall leaving the door ajar long enough for the Boss and Archibald to hear the closing strains of “Mr. Dooley”; which quickly shifted to “Upidee.”

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XV

THE POWER BEHIND THE BOSS.

A tribute paid to the money power. The Boss sends word through his messenger, Judge Collins.

As Tango closed the door, he announced to the Boss: "The speeches is all over. They're breakin' up."

"Tell Judge Collins," commanded the Boss, "to announce that I'd like to say a few words after a little while, and to ask the boys to wait. Also ask Judge Collins to tell Mr. Manville that I'd like to see him at once."

As Tango again opened the door, to deliver the Boss's message, gay banqueters were singing "My Lassie," but after a few moments the gavel, wielded by Judge Collins, was heard, and the crowd sensing that there must be some command from the king Boss, became sufficiently quiet that the Judge's announcement was heard. "Order, please. Boys, the Boss wants to address you. Wants you to wait." This was followed by cheers for the Boss.

Judge Collins came into the Boss's office,

closed the Banquet Hall door, and informed the Boss, "Manville left the Banquet Hall half an hour ago with the Governor."

"Well, I've got to see him. I'll git him over here. It's only two blocks away," said the Boss as he pushed the button. John responded promptly.

The Boss commanded, "Cap, git Fordyce Manville on the 'phone at the City Hotel."

As John went to carry out orders, Judge Collins uneasily inquired of the Boss, "What progress."

"Sure to be impeached," said the Boss with absolute assurance. "We'll have at least five votes more'n we need, but I'll tell Fordyce we'll give the Governor one more chance."

"That's good," replied Judge Collins hesitatingly. "But I'm afraid the Governor's speech has made some of them weaken."

"Can't phase one of 'em," the Boss firmly responded. "They're all on to him. If he don't surrender to-night, I want you to take the early train to the Capitol and hold the Assembly in session night and day until he's impeached."

"I hope you're right about the votes," said the Judge doubtfully.

The Boss further braced him up. "Well, it

may be a close finish, but it'll be the same as unanimous fer workin' purposes."

"I'm afraid we've picked a porcupine," Judge Collins admitted.

The Boss arose and cheerfully responded, "Judge, when I was a boy, breakin' colts wuz my long suit. Shackleton may be a mustang, but we'll ride him."

This was partly truth and partly romance. As a matter of fact, the Boss was city born but he had spent two years of his boyhood on his uncle's farm. He was rather rash as a boy, like he was bold as a man; but his experience with horses would sound tame as compared with the experience of Fordyce Manville. However, it was not unlike the Boss to brag about his prowess, where his skill or bravery could not be questioned. Anyhow, Judge Collins would not be the one to question him. He merely replied with his mind still on the Governor, "He's very ambitious. The ordinary things won't tempt him."

"It's his ambition I've appealed to," said the Boss. "He's got a lot to learn."

John had finally gotten Manville on the 'phone, and the Boss took up the receiver. "Hello! This you, Fordyce?—This is Talley. —Yes, I sent word in to the banquet that I

wanted to see ye, a while ago. Found you'd gone.—Can ye come up to the café again?—Yes. Well, we might make it worth while.—I'd rather wait until ye git here and then tell ye what I want.—Well, you're tryin' to protect the Governor, ain't ye?—Well, all right—all right.—Jest walk right into my apartment. All right. Good-bye."

Judge Collins asked, "Is he coming?"

"Why, of course," laughed the Boss. "But he says it'll be half an hour." And then said complacently. "We may not have to impeach the Governor at all—he may promise to do the right thing."

The Judge sat down. "I had a talk to-day with Jim Harkins. You know he's closer now than Purdy to the Roxmore combination, and he says the big money people are afraid of Shackleton."

"Well, they put up more money to elect him than they ever put up before fer anybody," said the Boss.

Judge Collins replied, "I suppose that's true, but you'll never make him think it was their money that elected him. He thinks it's his own popularity and his White House influence; and you know he *is* a sort of *idol* among the people."

Said the Boss, as he gave the Judge a look of rebuke. "Ye talk like ye're weakenin'. Now, let me tell ye. The people git their views from the newspaper, don't they? Well the newspapers is owned mostly by the big money interests, hain't they? The people think I'm the Boss. But I'm only the mouth-piece o' the *real boss—the money-power.*"

Judge Collins simply responded, "The Roxmore people are afraid Shackelton will think he's the American Eagle."

"With the aid o' the Roxmores," the Boss went on, "I'll mighty soon clip his wings and remove his tail feathers if he continues to use his office as Governor to spread his high-falutin' notions of morality and honesty. God knows he ain't honest, but he's posin' fer political purposes."

"I hope you're right," replied the Judge, without seeming to be convinced.

"Will you see Jim Harkins again to-night?" said the Boss.

"Yes," Judge Collins assented. "He wanted me to have a talk with you and see him again."

"Tell him we'll make Shackleton go straight accordin' to our wishes, er we'll impeach him," declared the Boss firmly. "Tell him we'll

make an example of Shackleton and, at the same time, give a warnin' to the White House."

"I'll tell him," said the Judge, as he arose and started for the door.

The Boss reasoned, "The chances are, we've got to throw the mustang first; and then when he gits up he'll take his mount more gently."

"I see what you mean," said the Judge agreeably.

"Impeachment is like an indictment," the Boss philosophized.

"After he's impeached we can make him see that there ain't so much disgrace attached to that. Then maybe he'll come across so we can withdraw it and avoid the conviction."

As the Boss concluded, he dismissed Judge Collins, his chief bagman and willing tool, with a gesture which was familiar to the Judge and all the other henchmen of the Boss, as indicating that the Boss himself had had enough.

XVI

THE TRAPPER TRAPPED.

John's blunder with the movie camera leads to his capture; Archibald turns detective.

Up to this point John had operated the moving picture camera with such skill as would have called out the admiration of Ruth had she been able to witness it. As the Boss was bribing Assemblyman Jones, the curtains were deftly parted just enough for the end of the camera to peep through, with a little crevice on the side through which John could see the goings on; and when the important conversation would cease, John would draw the curtain over the nose of the camera, against the possible detection of a stray glance from the Boss's side. And he had turned the camera deftly on Archibald, when he played the sinful role; and then on the Boss and Judge Collins to get their pose, while the dictograph was clicking off the conspiracy of their conversation.

But just as the plan had seemed to work almost to its completion, John made some awkward movement with the camera, which caused an unusual noise and shook the portieres, so the quick ear and eye of the Boss were attracted.

The Boss started, arose and crossed quickly to the window, parted the portieres and looked in. Then he rushed into the private office. "What the devil does this mean?" The noise of a struggle was heard, and immediately the Boss and John appeared in the main room, the Boss carrying the moving picture camera, holding on to the tripod. John had hold of the camera itself.

As they struggled, John fell, apparently by accident, the camera under his body, thus hiding the camera from the view of the Boss. John quickly removed the film retort, released his hold on the camera, arose, stepped back hiding the film deftly under his coat. The Boss felt victorious. "Tryin' t' git somethin' on me, eh? Thought ye could sell it, did ye?—you little blackmailer! I caught ye jest in time—I generally do. Well, you go the same way all the other meddlesome kids have went."

John appeared defiant. "See here, Boss, don't you—"

The Boss taking command once more, said:

“Not a word! Ye can do that with me only once; and don’t make a fool o’ yerself tellin’ anybody what ye heard, because they won’t believe ye.”

As John backed off to the entrance door his enthusiasm overcame his judgment; so he called back in derision, “If you impeach the Governor you’ll be the star in all the moving-picture shows in the country—and they’ll be talking pictures, too.”

As he went out into the main hall he slammed the door and a moment later another door outside was heard to slam.

Feeling that he had captured whatever evidence John got, the Boss was nonplussed at his assurance. Turning to Judge Collins he said: “What the devil does he mean?”

Judge Collins had an inspiration, crossed quickly to the camera, saying, “Maybe the little rascal got the film.” He quickly examined the camera and cried out “So he did.”

The Boss was excited. “Archie, see if ye can catch ’im.”

But before Archibald could get out, the Boss changed his mind. He was rattled.

“Wait!” said the Boss. “That ain’t good policy; it’d cost more. He’ll bring it around fer sale in a day or two, and he may bleed us

fer a hundred. Won't amount to nothin' more."

Archibald observed, "Well, this kid must be a pretty smart one; held the job down over two months since you took him back. That's more'n most of 'em do."

"Yes, too smart for our purposes. I was afraid it was a mistake to hire that kid again. He's probably done a lot uv spookin' around here. If he had witnesses to prove what he's seen and heard—but, of course, he ain't got none," thus the Boss consoled himself.

"No." Archibald agreed. "He'll just go off and pout a while, and find some other job, like all the rest uv 'em."

Archibald then picked up the camera and shoved it into the private office, looked under the portieres at the window and called out excitedly, "See here, Dad."

The Boss and Judge Collins crossed quickly to the window; and as the Judge removed the dictograph transmitter and touched the base receptacle with his finger, he received a shock, and jumped back quickly, shaking his hand. "It's alive all right. That's a dictograph connection. Where do you suppose the recording device has been placed?"

Archibald replied, "In the closet in the hall,

I'll bet. I heard the door slam when Cap went out." And Archibald darted out and down the hall, leaving the door ajar.

The Boss and Judge Collins crossed quickly to the door and watched him.

But Archibald was back in no time, all excited. "Yes, it's connected up in the closet there. Why, it must be that recording dictograph that Ruth told me about, the kind that records the voice itself. And the records are gone." The Boss crossed to his desk and appeared agitated, as he said, "Archie, ye'd better telephone the Chief of Police and report this case."

Again, as Archibald started toward the private office, the Boss changed his mind. "No; wait. You better go personally and attend to this. It may turn out to be important. Wait until I give you the kid's address." And taking a small book from a drawer in his desk, the Boss said, "There are two addresses here. Oh, yes. One is the old address crossed out. The one he gave when I hired him this time is 'four hundred and twenty East Seventeenth Street'."

"Four hundred and twenty East Seventeenth Street?" asked Archibald. "Why, Dad, that's where Ruth lives."

"Ruth? That girl you wuz engaged to?"

"Yes," said Archibald. "But she may have moved away. I hain't seen her for about three months."

The Boss took the trail. "Do you suppose that vixen has tried to put one over on us? Do ye think she could have planted this kid here to catch us?"

"I don't know," Archibald meditated, "I've always been afraid uv 'er ever since I threw 'er over. She's purty smart."

"You tell the Chief o' Police to have her house searched and find out whether she's got a brother about the size o' this kid," commanded the Boss. "Tell the Chief to find out all about it."

"She would be just clever enough to put that boy in here and not give his own address, but give hers," Archibald reasoned, as he seemed in a deep, philosophic study. "Say, Dad, you remember Ruth's an expert with the moving picture camera and dictographs. She's just about trained this kid to do this work."

"Tell the Chief, if necessary, to frame up a charge again' that woman herself and put 'er through the third degree," said the Boss, "and

make 'er come across with anything she knows about it."

Archibald seemed to have some misgivings. "I don't know—" But as he looked at the commanding gaze of his father, he felt reassured. "I guess you're right, I'll go right down." And Archibald quickly took his leave, without closing the office door behind him. The Boss thought he knew his power with the City machinery. He had not often made mistakes in picking his men; and naturally he could not accomplish the big things of his life without delegating power. So when Archibald was on his mission to the Chief of Police, the Boss dismissed the matter from his mind. That was a closed chapter. He knew it would be taken care of.

As if nothing had happened to ruffle him, the Boss looked at his watch and said to Judge Collins: "Fordyce won't be here for a few minutes. Suppose we show ourselves in the Banquet Hall."

"That boy is starting young at the grafting game," said the Judge.

"Yes," replied the Boss, "but Archibald will land him."

As the Boss and the Judge opened the door to go into the Banquet Hall, the banquet

crowd were singing "The Bowery." The discords and maudlin tones indicated clearly the stage to which the banquet had progressed.

XVII

EDITH'S SORROW.

Why Edith broke her engagement with Fordyce.

No sooner had the door closed behind the Boss and the Judge than Edith looked into the Boss's room through the door which Archibald had left ajar. Seeing nobody there she ventured in, looked about, and seemed somewhat bewildered. She crossed to the banquet hall entrance, put her hand on the door knob as if intending to open the door, changed her mind, and crossed slowly to the Boss's desk and sat beside it. She was looking for Fordyce Manville.

Fordyce then arrived. He paused at the threshold, looked very serious until he noticed Edith, when his countenance brightened up. He crossed quickly to Edith.

"Oh! Edith, I was looking for you at the

hotel," said he as he embraced and kissed her.

Edith disengaged herself. "My father just told me you had come over here. I must have missed you while you were looking about the lobby for me," said she in a matter of fact way, and then growing serious, she continued, "I have something on my mind that I must tell you."

Fordyce looked at his watch. He had not caught Edith's mood. "I am a little ahead of time," he said quietly. "The Boss is probably in the banquet hall and may not be here for a few minutes. Tell me now."

"I scarcely slept last night," said Edith as she appeared crestfallen.

Fordyce still seemed to be thinking along some other line; in fact, his mind was on the contest which he knew was coming between him and the Boss. His thought was of Edith's father, rather than of Edith, it must be confessed; so he was somewhat prosaic in manner and tone, as he said, "Yes, my dear, I thought that when I saw you this morning." Then he seemed to realize the situation, and he added tenderly, "Tell me what's the matter; maybe I can help you."

Edith confided, "You can." Then she hesitated and almost broke down. "It is hard for

me to tell you, but you must know."

Fordyce put his arm gently about Edith's shoulder. "Is it something awful, Edith?", said he, with a smile indicating that he had doubted the extent of her trouble.

Edith broke away from him, and indicated a seat by the Boss's desk.

Fordyce meekly sat and awaited the outcome.

Edith started. "Mr. Manville—"

She was not permitted to finish, but was interrupted by the surprised expression and words of Fordyce. "Oh! that's terrible, Edith! Mr. Manville? Since when have I ceased to be Fordyce to you?" He seemed overcome with grief. He rose, grasped Edith's hand lovingly and held it up so the engagement ring on her finger showed to both of them. He lifted her hand gently and kissed the ring, and made a motion as if again to embrace and kiss Edith. Edith recoiled and once more indicated the chair to Fordyce. This time he did not obey, but stood gazing at Edith in bewilderment. Edith removed the ring from her finger, handed it to Fordyce with one hand, and with the other hand, took out a handkerchief, put it to her face, and sobbed. Between the sobs she

said almost inaudibly "We must break our engagement."

Fordyce quickly asked, "What does it mean, Edith? No! no!" he exclaimed, but Edith had forced the ring into his hand without his understanding how.

"This is a greater sorrow to me than it can be to you," Edith murmured, and then with heroic effort pulled herself together and spoke clearly, "But it must be; I am determined. You yourself have told me that you thought father would be impeached and convicted; that you thought the Boss had control over the Assembly and also the Judges and Senators. I have pictured it all—"

Fordyce was relieved. This to him did not seem a serious obstacle, and he hurriedly asked the questions to which the answers seemed obvious to his mind. "Is that all, little girl? Well, suppose it should come out that way? Is that the reason?"

"Yes," came the quick answer.

Fordyce went on reassuringly. "I would then want you all the more, and I would then want to be near your father more than ever. You know I am his friend."

"I know," responded Edith gently. "That is one reason why I must do this. If my father

is thrown out of office, it means disgrace. I'd never want to look the world in the face again. My place would then be the cloister."

Fordyce put his hand affectionately on Edith's arm and in coaxing voice, urged, "Why, Edith, you are mistaken. Would the conviction of your father by such a court as I have told you about mean disgrace? Not in the eyes of the people. He would soon be vindicated. In fact, to be convicted in such manner would itself amount to vindication. You mustn't think of bleaching your beautiful face and mourning your life away, no matter what happens. Would you not be happy with me?" He did not give her time to answer. "Edith, dear, I love you more than anything else on earth. It would make no difference what happens to your father or to you, my love for you is genuine, and I know will be everlasting. Don't you still love me?"

Edith admitted, "Yes, I do love you; that's the other reason. I would not humiliate you by being your wife, if my father is disgraced even in that way. You'd have a contempt for me."

Fordyce undertook to convince her. "Why, Edith, no such thing could possibly—"

Edith broke in. "You think you would not.

But you are proud; you are high-minded; you have opportunities; you have distinguished associates; you may be elected Mayor of this great city. You might doggedly hold out against it for a while. You might laugh at the first club friend who would shun you. You might scorn the first man or woman that you would overhear saying, 'There's Manville; married the daughter of the disgraced Governor.' But my imagination has taken me further into the future than that. Whenever we'd walk together, or sit in the theatre, or get in a cab, or ride in an automobile, or dine at a café—everywhere—all eyes would be glued on us; I'd know and you'd know that they were not kindly eyes. No! no! Mr. Manville."

Fordyce could only beg for time. "But why do this now? Why don't you wait? Something may happen, after all, that your father will not be impeached and convicted. We are going to put up an awful fight; and we are going to produce some evidence that will surprise the Court."

Edith brightened up and asked eagerly, "Then you think there's a chance?"

Fordyce felt that he must at least partially satisfy Edith's curiosity, and he proceeded, "I'll tell you a most profound secret. Ruth

Woodstock, the girl you saw here on election night, was terribly wronged by Archibald and thrown aside. You were the innocent cause. He and his father connived to capture you, thinking that thereby they'd gain their permanent hold on the Governor."

"I hate Archibald," Edith said angrily. "I knew his intentions were not honorable."

Fordyce continued. "Ruth called on me at the Capitol and explained how she planned to get even with Archibald—she wants to help your father, and you and me."

Edith proved herself clever, as she reminded Fordyce of his previously expressed opinion. "But you said they'd convict him, anyway, no matter what the evidence."

"Yes," Fordyce admitted. "It's a packed court. But let's postpone this. Let me feel the greater strength that will come to me in the fight, for knowing that we are still engaged. If the Governor is not impeached and convicted, you would not want to break the engagement, would you?"

"No," acquiesced Edith. "But I must have it off my mind now, or the thought will drive me mad."

Fordyce was sad. He drooped his head and looked woe-begone. The Boss was not in his

mind then, nor the Governor either; in fact, there was room only for Edith. He felt his prize slipping away from him. "And I am afraid this will drive *me* mad," he complained scarcely above a whisper.

Edith held out bravely as she said, "Keep the ring, and if father is acquitted, I will wear it again."

Fordyce brightened up perceptibly and asked, "That's a promise?"

Edith gave her assurance. "Yes; I have promised."

A cloud came over Fordyce's countenance. He looked angry as he asked the question implying rebuke,—“Can this mean that you feel you must offer me yourself as a prize for doing my best to clear your father?” And he scolded. “I thought you knew that I would move heaven and earth to have him win out.”

Edith was deeply touched as she realized that she had been misunderstood. She put her hand gently on Fordyce's arm, “No! no! Fordyce—I *will* call you Fordyce whether we renew our engagement or not, because I *do love you*—I do know that you will do everything in your power for my father—just for him; I know that. Please do not think me capable of laying a plot against you. It is just for the other

reasons that I told you. No matter how much or how little you have to do with his victory, the minute the Judge says "Not Guilty," I am yours.



XVIII

THE BOSS AND THE COWBOY

Edith's trying ordeal, listening to the clash between the Boss and Fordyce—her father being the subject.

Fordyce and Edith were interrupted by the sudden burst of rough, uncouth singing. The song was "Auld Lang Syne." They both looked up and saw the Boss coming through the Banquet Hall door.

As he closed the door, he saluted Edith complacently, "How do you do, Miss Shackleton?"

Edith responded "Excuse me, Mr. Talley; I hope I have not interrupted. I came to see Mr. Manville."

Edith had crossed to the hall door and was about to take her departure when the Boss said, "I asked Mr. Manville to come in," and turning to Fordyce, "I have no objection if Miss Shackleton remains. She is interested in her father's case."

Fordyce gently asked Edith, "Would you like to stay?"

"Why, yes," Edith calmly replied, and took a seat by the small desk.

The Boss then addressed himself seriously to Fordyce. "Will you be seated?"

"'Tain't too late to call things off," said the Boss, as Fordyce crossed to his desk and sat down.

"You mean the impeachment?" queried Fordyce.

"I might stop the impeachment," replied the Boss doubtfully. "But even if he's impeached, we might find a way a have the impeachment withdrawn, if the Governor'd promise to do the right thing."

Fordyce responded quickly, "You mean if the Governor would promise to do the wrong thing."

"You know what I mean," the Boss retorted. "And if ye're a friend o' the Governor ye'll listen to reason. Ye're givin' him bad advice now."

"The whole extent of my advice to the Governor," said Fordyce, "is that he shall be true to his Oath of Office, and true to the people. If that is bad advice, it is the only kind I have in store."

"I'm showin' ye a chance t' save 'im," the Boss argued, and then he softened his tone.

“Tain’t so bad t’ be impeached; that’s jest like bein’ indicted or accused.” And then the Boss warned, “But it’s a mighty disgraceful thing fer the Governor o’ this State to be convicted—worse’n six feet o’ sod. Besides, that ain’t goin’ t’ be the end. I’m goin’ t’ have the Criminal Courts go after him. Ha! ha! ha! He’ll be a fine lookin’ hero fer you and his daughter,” said the Boss derisively, as he gave Edith a fiendish glance, “to take flowers to in prison. The Governor o’ the State all tied ’round with a lot of striped woolen strings!”

Edith would have made a study for a psychologist as she sat watching the clash between the Boss, whom she hated, and Fordyce, whom she loved—the Boss whose skill she reckoned as great;—Fordyce whose ability and brilliancy she believed was equal to the contest with the Boss. Her countenance reflected every change of feeling, from pleasure at the bravery of Fordyce, to tense anxiety when the battle seemed drawn, to visible anguish, when the Boss had finally reached the point of threatening her father with imprisonment.

Fordyce stood his ground, arose and said defiantly, “You can’t get enough votes to impeach him.”

“I’ve got ’em counted,” retorted the Boss,

"and I've gone so far with it that I don't know whether I could call 'em off or not, so far as impeachment's concerned, but, under certain conditions, I might try."

"Well, even if he is impeached, I'm not so sure that he'll be convicted," Fordyce said, in a manner that indicated doubt in his own mind.

"Yes, he'll be impeached, and convicted," said the Boss, with an air of confidence, "and probably sent to prison besides."

Fordyce replied with resentment, "There's room in the State Penitentiary for more than one. I'm on to your high-handed methods, Mr. Talley; and, no matter what happens to Governor Shackleton, you'll have me to deal with afterwards."

"And by what power will I be compelled to deal with you?" queried the Boss, defiantly.

Fordyce raised his hand above his head as he answered slowly and impressively, "The power of the majesty of the law."

The Boss again issued his warning, "You're takin' a terrible responsibility. You know my power, and you know I'm desperate."

"I realize the extent of your perfidy," said Fordyce in mingled anger and defiance, "but I still doubt your power. But if it must be a fight to the finish, the blame is on your head."

My God, man, can't you awaken your conscience? Do you realize what your life means? What pleasure do you get out of your selfish graft-methods of politics?"

"I admit I'm selfish," the Boss replied brazenly. "I'm lookin' out fer number one."

"But you have enough—you're rich," Fordyce pleaded. "Think of how you're bringing up your son. What do you expect him to be, when you give him daily and hourly lessons in grafting, cheating, lying, stealing, and—all but murder—yes, lessons in hiring the gangsters to commit murder?"

Fordyce had worked himself up to a fury, which, however, he managed to suppress, as he went on in apparent calmness. "What a nation of patriots the second generation would be if all fathers emulated you! The time would soon come when women might well be ashamed to become mothers, lest their sons should be like yours."

"Beware, sir. I don't want yer insults, or I'll put you in a cell next to the Governor," threatened the Boss.

It was then Fordyce's time to threaten. "Let me tell you the net is drawing around your bagmen. Right now there is enough evidence in the hands of the prosecutors in vari-

ous parts of the State to make an annex to the State Prison appear more prosperous than any hotel—and all the threads lead toward you as the star boarder.”

The Boss again sneered. “The prosecutors are all politicians, and they know that practical politics are necessary.”

Fordyce felt a little hope that his philosophy might get through the hard head of the Boss, and so he went on. “Times have changed, but human nature is the same; and most young politicians now, as always, will do what the public expects of them. But what’s the use? You have become so calloused and so blind in the feeling of safety in your fortress of crime that nothing short of the vengeance of an aroused public will bring you to. So sleep on, or, when aroused, drain the cup and dance, like the Babylonians of old, till the real men—the soldiers of honor—capture your citadel and call down upon you the curse of Heaven.”

As Fordyce finished, the Boss fairly chuckled, and showed by his smile that he had nothing but ridicule as reward for such philosophy. “A nice highbrow speech fer old women and Sunday-school children! Why don’t ye learn some practical sense; ye’ve mingled with men enough. Anyhow, high and mighty morals

ain't comin' unstrained from a cowboy; very likely you've done what any uv 'em will do when they git a chance—held up a stage coach er a train."

This was the first personal insult the Boss had ever affronted Fordyce with, but it only stimulated the fighting blood of the ex-cowboy.

"Even with your limited knowledge of history," said Fordyce, rather sneeringly, "you know that on the average that isn't the reputation of cowboys; you know that their honor is held sacred; but any of them would have the bravery to do just what you say if it were not for their honor. You would never "stick up" a train. Neither would Archibald—ask him. You do your work at a safe distance; but you wouldn't hesitate to hire it done and pay for it out of the loot—and that's what you are doing now. You stand in the road and gather toll from every contractor—from the railroads, gas companies, water companies—in fact, all public service corporations, and many private corporations and individuals, who are made to stand and deliver, in the fear of being damaged in some secret way by you, if they refuse. Not content with that, you tax the office-holders and the politicians. You take for yourself a part of every political contribu-

tion, and in many cases you keep the entire amount. So that it all aggregates millions to you. Everything that comes to your mill is grist—and about everything comes to your mill.”

“I do what’s done in ever’ business. I make all I can out o’ what I do,” the Boss admitted.

Fordyce was not done with his accusations. “You misconstrue the sentiment of most business people. You mingle with contractors who are corrupt, or whom you make corrupt. You are associated with gunmen and with the few policemen who are willing to serve your dishonest purposes; your familiars are the dive-keepers and bawdy house proprietors and the Monte Carlo kings; and you measure success in life by their success in these criminal callings. You cannot see beyond it, so, of course, you think all business men dishonest.”

“If you had your way, the government’d close up about ever’ business,” said the Boss, anxious to make the discussion impersonal.

“Only the law-breakers,” replied Fordyce. “You and your associates laugh at real government—have a contempt for representatives of the people, and nothing but miserable pity for the people themselves, who seem so powerless to prevent you from usurping the real gov-

ernment and substituting therefor your invisible government. What does the flag mean to you? A mockery! What would you or your son do to save the country? Like suttlers and camp-followers, you menace the cause of patriotism. You'd stop the army in its forward march till you could loot the supply wagon and gather toll from the salary of the soldiers. You make a name of hatred for yourself, and you send your son headlong down the road of infamy."

"Now, git down to brass tacks," urged the Boss. "Are ye goin' t' advise the Governor to hoist the flag o' truce, or ain't ye?"

Fordyce answered without quibble, "I'm going to advise the Governor to fight."

"See here, Fordyce," the Boss purred. "Go fetch the Governor, and let me talk to him."

"I wouldn't refuse to carry your message," said Fordyce rather testily. "I'll tell him you want to see him; but he'll ask me what for, and I shall tell him."

"All right. I'll wait. But put it to 'im strong," said the Boss, as he took Fordyce at his word. And then in over-polite manner the Boss addressed himself to Edith. "And you might put in a word, too, if you want to save

your father; or will ye wait until yer father comes?"

The ordeal through which Edith had passed as she listened to the clash between Fordyce and the Boss had been a most trying one. Her admiration for Fordyce had wonderfully increased, as he fought her father's battles so bravely. But her hatred of the Boss had likewise multiplied. She realized more and more the danger of his carrying out his threat of impeachment to the very bitter end. Edith had made it a part of her training, after the example of her mother, not to hate anybody; but training had been thrown to the winds as she received the punishment of the Boss's villainous purposes against her father, very much as if she herself had been the intended victim.

Edith was therefore in no mood to reciprocate the Boss's feigned consideration. "No!" said she, as her loathing gaze rested on the object of her hatred, and she started for the door, "I'll go with Mr. Manville for my father," and they walked out arm in arm.

XIX

CINCHING THE ARGUMENT

The Boss addresses the banqueters; and is serenaded. Archibald reports having caught Cap.

The Boss stood for a moment in deep meditation, then braced himself, walked briskly to the door of the Banquet Hall and opened it. He was greeted with more maudlin singing—this time “Annie Rooney” had just reached the words “Little Annie Rooney is my —,” but at sight of the Boss the song was dropped, and the crowd begun to cheer. Some one in the Banquet Hall proposed three cheers for the Boss, which were heartily given.

The Boss did not go in, but kept his distance, perhaps for the purpose of the greater dignity and the greater influence over his minions. When the noise had quieted he called to Tango, and as Tango entered, the Boss said “Boys I’ll be with ye in jest a moment,” and closed the door. “Tango,” said the Boss, “I’m expectin’

the Governor in a few minutes, an' when he comes, you and Tex and Spot be ready. I may want to make a demonstration."

Again the Boss opened the door, and again the crowd yelled, repeating the three cheers for the Boss. From his position in the door the Boss played his final card for supreme influence over the Assemblymen and workers.

He spoke in his happiest mood. "Boys, I guess ye found out to-night what kind uv a hypocrite the Governor is."

Applause rewarded his insinuation against the Governor.

"That feller couldn't lay in bed straight," continued the Boss. Again the crowd applauded.

The Boss grew bolder as he nailed his point. "If there's any Assemblyman in this room too big a coward to go to the Capitol on the early mornin' train, and vote day and night fer the impeachment uv the Governor until he's impeached"—with an impressive pause he waved his hand and uttered this dare—"let the coward speak up." No sound was heard, and he put the other side of the question. "All that promise to stand by the Organization and impeach the scoundrel—say Aye."

The crowd yelled "Aye" in concert, and

cheered themselves for yelling. The Boss's voice changed to a persuasive appeal, "And all you district leaders an' faithful workers, don't forgit that we must root ever' minute fer the 'lection uv Judge Collins to be our next Mayor. Our time's short—only 'bout a month. By then we'll have Governor Shackleton out, and the Lieutenant-Governor, who is a friend uv ours, in his place, and it'll seem like old times."

The crowd applauded and cheered once more.

"How would ye like to have that wild west-erner, Fordyce Manville, fer Mayor?" the Boss asked derisively. The crowd laughed and several voices were heard to say, "No! no! Down with him."

The Boss followed up his advantage. "Manville'd stick up a reform tent on ever' corner and try to git all you fellers to lecture."

The crowd laughed and applauded.

The Boss continued to poke fun at Fordyce Manville. "He'd close up ever' saloon on the minute. He'd stop all the innocent gamblin' games; and scatter the people from the Tenderloin to all parts of the city to associate with your mothers and sisters. I ain't afraid uv his bein' 'lected, but we want a big majority

agin' him and in favor uv Judge Collins—jest fer the moral influence."

This elicited wild and continuous cheers.

The Boss felt that his victory was won, and that the time had come to stop. Though not an orator, he possessed that one great quality in orators of knowing when he had said enough. "Now, boys, I'm goin' to say good-night to ye. But remember we all stand together. Good-night."

Amidst wild applause, the Boss bowed himself away from the crowd and back to his desk.

Judge Collins entered from the Banquet Hall and closed the door. "Boss, I guess you know your game."

The Boss merely said, "The Governor'll soon be here, and if we can't git 'im our way—git on the job, and keep me posted on ever' move, and if I don't call the thing off before the Assembly convenes, then turn the dogs loose on Shackleton."

Again, the crowd was heard, this time outdoors under the bay window, singing, "He's a Jolly Good Fellow."

The Boss stepped to the window. The noise ceased. "Good-night, boys," he spoke good-naturedly. "Don't forget we stand together,"

and with a farewell wave of his hand, walked back to his desk. The crowd was then heard singing "Good-Night Ladies," and as the sound grew fainter, the tune changed to "The Good Old Summer Time," became still fainter and finally faded away.

Archibald came in smiling and excited. "Dad, I had quite a session." He crossed to the Boss's desk, removed from under his coat a dictograph record and a film retort, laid them on the desk and said, triumphantly, "It took twenty detectives to catch the little devil, but here's his evidence."

The Boss betrayed the hidden fear which he had harbored by his uncontrollable laughter and by his unusual compliment to Archibald. "Ha! ha! ha! Archie, you're a trump." He then picked up and examined the record and the film. "Go and destroy these things," said he as he handed them to Archibald. "We'll take no more chances."

Archibald started toward the private office, hesitated and inquired, "Have you had the round-up with the Governor yit?"

"No, I laid the law down to Fordyce, and he's gone to fetch the Governor. The girl's with him."

• “You mean Miss Shackleton?” queried Archibald with manifest interest.

“Yes. You stick around. I may want to make that play about your marryin’ her. For-dyce ain’t showin’ no sense.”

XX

THE GOVERNOR AT BAY

The Boss makes final threats against the Governor. Edith offers to sacrifice herself. The Governor defies the Boss.

The Boss was rejoiced at the success of Archibald in capturing what he thought to be the films and records; for while he had not realized how far reaching they might be, he had a lingering dread that they might prove serious, and he wanted all the courage he could muster for his final appeal to the Governor. So having been reassured by Archibald's success, when the Governor strode slowly in, the Boss felt his own power. "Come in, Governor," was his cordial greeting. "Have a seat."

As the Governor sat down the Boss opened up, with apparent friendly interest. "Governor, I sent fer ye because I want to give you one more chance to save yerself. By the way, I thought perhaps yer daughter and Mr. Manville would come back with ye."

"I think they will both be here presently," responded the Governor, without any expression whatever.

The Boss went straight at the business in hand. "If ye'll promise to obey orders I'll try to prevent the impeachment in the Assembly tomorrow."

"Mr. Talley, I want to make my administration a success, and I'm willing to favor you in any reasonable way."

The Boss felt that the Governor was about ready to give in. He therefore reasoned that the time had come to press him harder. "There is jest one way now, Governor Shackleton—and I won't have to call ye Governor long, either, unless ye comply—there's jest one way that ye can favor me now and save yerself, and that's to make an unconditional surrender. In other words, if I must use plain language, ye've got to obey orders while ye're Governor and while I am Boss. It only takes a minute to make up yer mind—now what are ye goin' to do about it?"

The Governor responded, seemingly without emotion, "I cannot get the consent of my conscience to violate my oath of office."

The Boss undertook to arouse the Governor by brutal sarcasm. "I suppose ye're like Henry Clay—ye'd rather be right than President."

The Governor's reply showed he had not

weakened. "I have proved that I'd rather be right than Governor. You know, Mr. Talley, that the State is honeycombed with graft—graft—graft; and you not only seem willing to encourage this graft to go on, but you propose to force me to take a hand in it, to be a party to it, and you have the cards all stacked for my impeachment if I refuse."

The Boss next drew the weapon of ridicule. "Marvelous intuition, Governor; no prophet could foretell any truer." And then, drawing his face up into a most serious expression, he proceeded: "Yes, ye've got to take a hand in it; ye've got to lend yer influence to it; ye've got to support Judge Collins fer Mayor, and all my other candidates; ye've got to make Manville—yer prospective son-in-law—withdraw from the race fer Mayor; ye've got to be one uv us, or else ye've got to be impeached. I want to know whether you are fer me er agin me. Are ye ready to answer?"

"I have answered you," the Governor said. "I would put up with a great deal rather than have a break—rather than jeopardize the solidity of our party organization, but when you demand that I help extract money from the people to pour into the hopper of your graft machine I must refuse. Why, Mr. Talley,

think what you're doing! You ask me to turn over to you the key to the safe of our people, so that you can loot the safe. If I were the trusted custodian of the funds of a bank and a yeggman should propose to divide those funds, if I would let him have the key and threaten to blackjack me if I refused, I would consider him on a par with you."

The Boss asked, with finality, "Then I may regard yer decision as final? Do ye refuse to obey?"

The Governor slowly arose, and replied calmly but firmly, "I refuse."

Cajolery and threats had failed. A weapon reserved for one of the last was intimidation. At least it was the last weapon the Boss himself could use in his fight against the Governor, and he hoped to avoid the necessity of trying to frighten Edith into making a sacrifice of herself by her marriage to Archibald.

Before the Governor could reach the door the Boss arose and in commanding tone said to the Governor: "Jest a minute," then signaled to Tango, Tex and Spot.

As the Governor turned again and faced the Boss, Tango, Tex and Spot crowded around him.

In quiet, sardonic tone, the Boss said: "Gov-

ernor, these are some friends of mine—you met 'em once."

"Yes, I remember," the Governor admitted.

The Boss unmasked his claws and snarled, "If ye don't come across we're goin' to impeach ye, and convict ye on impeachment; er we'll put ye away on criminal charges; an' if that don't work then my friends here will take care uv ye." As he concluded he made a sweeping gesture toward Tango, Tex and Spot, who quickly put their right hands on their hip pockets and crowded still closer to the Governor.

Fordyce and Edith came in just in time to see the demonstration of the gunmen.

Edith screamed with surprise and fear and crossed quickly to her father. "Father! Father!"

Fordyce followed Edith, and gave the gunmen a maddening look.

They skulked away to the other side of the room, and looked out of the windows.

The Governor put his arm about Edith, "Don't worry, my dear."

"Father, isn't there some way?" cried Edith, in anguish. And turning quickly to the Boss, "You know, Mr. Talley, my father has done no wrong. Why do you want to disgrace him?"

I appeal to you in the name of justice—in the name of my mother, who has gone before.” She then crossed to Archibald, “I appeal to you, Mr. Talley; you have told me you would do anything for me—tell *your* father not to disgrace *my* father.”

Archibald calmly flipped the ashes from his cigarette and replied: “Miss Shackleton, I did tell you I’d do anything for you, and I would yet, but you gave me to understand that you wanted no favors and no attention from me. Do you still feel the same way about it?”

“I’d make any sacrifice for my father,” Edith confessed.

Archibald caught her hidden and unintended meaning. “You’d call it a sacrifice, would you?”

Edith’s quick response would of course be lost on a man of Archibald’s ideals. “When a man loves a woman he does not ask her to pay first—he’ll do what she asks and take his chances.”

His response was scornful. “I hain’t been brought up to take chances—I play a sure game. I don’t intend to interfere with my father’s business—I couldn’t if I wanted to, but if you felt different toward me *my* father might feel different toward *your* father.”

The Boss broke in savagely, "Archie, this is no marshmallow party." And after a short pause, "Tell the Governor what you mean."

As has been remarked before, the Boss never did anything without a purpose. When he sharply called down Archibald, Archibald understood, by prearrangement, that it was a part of the play. The Boss knew that Edith would be more likely to yield if the plan should be opposed by him; and her look proved how well he had calculated.

He gave Archibald the signal, and Archibald proceeded: "Governor, I am sure father will let you have your way about everything else if Edith will have me."

The Boss meekly responded, "Yes, I've been thinkin' it over. I want to do anythin' I can fer my son; I'll surrender, and you may be the Governor, indeed, from the minute Archibald and Edith become husband and wife."

The pent-up feelings in Fordyce exploded. "Governor, what is your decision?"

"The same as yours." flashed back the Governor.

And Fordyce delivered the ultimatum, "Then we'll fight these hell-hounds to the death!"

The Boss again resumed his savage mood, "Then very well. Fight it shall be." And he stood master of the game. Archibald had performed well. The Governor, and even Fordyce had played right into his hand. All the soldiers of Edith's army had been slain. Her love for Fordyce, her high ideals of virtue, her sense of fairness in warfare, all, all lay vanquished at her feet—subordinated to the one thought uppermost in her mind, that of her father's rescue from the prison pen of the enemy. Hysterically she made her surrender to the Boss, "No! no! I will marry your son. Then you'll spare my father?"

Archibald seized Edith's hand with apparent delight.

Fordyce forced their separation, and started to lead Edith away.

Edith broke away from Fordyce and threw her arms about her father. "Yes, father, yes! I'll do it; I'll do it. You must be saved from this disgrace."

The Governor had no more thought of ambition. "You marry a man you don't love?"

"But, father, I can learn to love Archibald, if his father does this great thing for you—spares you from disgrace." And giving Fordyce only a glance, "God help you, Mr. Man-

ville, to forgive me." She put her hand on Archibald's arm in almost seeming affection. "Tell *your* father to spare *my* father, and I will be your wife."

The Governor wailed out, "No! no!"

Edith fell on her knees at her father's feet, grasped his hand, and in a most impassioned plea, urged: "Father, the sword hangs over your head, and I have the power to prevent its fatal stroke. You'd do this for me—you shall not stop me from doing it for you."

The Governor lifted Edith up. His determination was growing. "You must not! You shall not!"

The Boss replied with interrogatory challenge, "Then ye refuse to let yer daughter marry my son?"

The Governor said, with subdued emotion, "I love my daughter as but few fathers can love, and she loves me, and my disgrace may mean her death. But this piece of business would amount to the most hateful form of white slavery." Slapping himself on the chest, with suppressed rage, "With me—her father, the auctioneer—knocking her down from the block to the highest bidder! No! no! Rather than see her pure soul and body polluted by

such a foul, lecherous bedfellow as your son I myself would dig her grave."

Edith buried her face in her hands, drooped her head, and with emotion protested, "But your disgrace!

The Governor responded quickly, "If disgrace must come let it not be for bartering away the soul of a spotless woman," and then he gently threw the skirt of his great-coat about Edith with his left hand, and pointed to the Boss with his right hand. "Do your worst against me, against my State and against my country, but always remember that you have not conquered me," and then he put his right arm gently but firmly about Edith and still looking at the Boss continued, "because I still have my daughter and my honor."

The Boss chopped out these words, like the barking of a dog, "This means impeachment."

The Governor led Edith a pace or two nearer the Boss, and apparently sealed his own doom with words which left no doubt as to their meaning. "Welcome impeachment! Welcome disgrace! If I am to be led to the shambles of public scorn let history record the everlasting truth that I was borne down by reason of my conscience—by my oath to be true to the people—and by the fear of God."

PART FOUR

(XXI to XXIII inclusive.)

The Senate Chamber is the scene of the final events in the struggle between the Governor and the Boss; and the time is in the evening of another election day—one year after the Boss celebrated the Governor's election.



XXI

CONVICTION SEEMS CERTAIN

The vote is taken. Judge Collins and Fordyce Manville compete as lawyers, while competing as candidates.

In the stately Senate Chamber, just a year after the Governor was elected, he sat at what proved to be the final session of his trial for impeachment. The Boss had carried out his threat. The Assembly had impeached him one month before, and his fate hung in the balance. It was a night session with small attendance. As explained by the presiding officer, the municipal elections all over the State had drawn and held many of the senators and some of the judges. Those present were standing in silence when the presiding officer, one of the judges in the habiliments of his judicial

position, entered and strode slowly down the room until he reached his desk. He gave two firm raps with the gavel, and all in the court room sat down save the court crier. "Hear ye! Hear ye! Hear ye! All persons having business before this Court of Impeachment give their attendance and they will be heard."

The presiding officer then announced: "The Court feels it a duty to state that the small attendance of this night session, which it is hoped will be final, is due to the mayoralty elections held to-day in various cities of the State, and particularly on account of the exciting interest at the metropolis of the State. Nevertheless, we have a quorum present and if counsel for both sides can possibly finish the work of the trial this evening it is hoped they will do so."

Before taking a recess the Court had heard arguments on the motion of counsel for the defense.

Judge Collins urged, "Your Honor, I ask that you deny the motion."

The ruling on the motion was prompt. "The motion of counsel for defendant is denied."

Fordyce quickly stood up. "Your Honor, I am expecting a new witness who should be here any minute, and I ask in the interest of fairness that a short delay be granted."

But the presiding officer had determined, "If the defense has no further witnesses on hand now the argument will begin."

Fordyce again pleaded: "But, your Honor, a very short delay will be in the interest of justice."

The presiding officer firmly settled the question, "You should have had your witnesses on hand. The Court will hear the arguments of the prosecution."

Judge Collins arose to make the opening argument. There was a rustle of expectancy. Judge Collins wore an air of confidence. He reasoned that the judges and senators were on his side regardless of the argument. To him it seemed merely a perfunctory act to make the speech at all; indeed to him the impeachment and trial themselves were perfunctory. When the Boss said the Governor should be removed that was sufficient for Judge Collins.

But under the circumstances he was proud of the opportunity to make the speech, for it gave him a chance to score a victory over Fordyce Manville, even though he had secret forebodings that Fordyce Manville might have scored a victory over him that day at the mayoralty election, where these two were pitted against each other before the people, as they

were pitted against each other this night before the impeachment court.

Judge Collins would have been happier in approaching this final piece of work if news of the mayoralty election at the metropolis had reached him before the time for his speech—that is, if that news had proclaimed his election and Mr. Manville's defeat. However, he went through the formality of a short speech with a dignity cultivated by long years of court practice and by his own experience on the bench.

“Your Honor, it is not a pleasure to charge corruption and malfeasance against the Chief Executive of this great State. In that respect my position, as counsel for the prosecution, holds an exact similarity to the position of yourself, your Honor, and of each member of this distinguished Court.

“Your Honor has requested counsel to aid in concluding this trial to-night and I shall not obstruct this program by any lengthy argument. Both the value of time and the thorough understanding of the evidence submitted seem to me to render it inadvisable that I should go over the voluminous records step by step or attempt to elucidate the logic of the case, which is already so clear to each of you. I shall, therefore, content myself with a brief

appeal to your sense of justice and of your great patriotic duty.

“If the State could best be served, and the Governor spared the humiliation of conviction under the impeachment and of removal from his high office, all of you, I am sure, would be glad to bring in a judgment of acquittal, no matter what you may personally think of the Governor, no matter if you do regard him as weak, indiscreet or even incompetent.

“But I submit that the evidence which has been volunteered by those who felt deeply that the honor of the State required the Governor’s removal; as well as the evidence reluctantly given by his sympathizers, all points clearly to guilt; and to the absolute need of dragging him from his high place, subordinating him to the ranks of a private citizen and warning him and all others that hereafter regard must be had for the dignity and honor of the commonwealth.

“It is your duty, as judges sitting in the highest Court of the State, from whose decision there can be no appeal, to ignore sympathy, forget personal preference and to hew to the line of the evidence in making up your solemn judgment for the weal or woe of the State we all love.”

As Judge Collins sat down and Fordyce Manville arose to respond there was a death-like stillness in the room. Fordyce nodded respectfully to the presiding officer, turned squarely facing Judge Collins, and gave him a long, hard look. Then he let his eye fall on Hiram Talley and Archibald. In that short look they must have read a whole volume of contempt and scorn; then he turned slowly and completely around until he had caught the gaze of every judge and every senator in the body, consuming perhaps thirty seconds' time before he uttered a word.

As the Boss sat between Judge Collins and Archibald and noted the self-poise of Fordyce he must have regretted that Fordyce was not one of his minions—he surely felt his power. He would undoubtedly have been afraid of the result but for his egotistical faith in his own influence over the body who had the final say.

Next to the impeachment the thought uppermost in the mind of the Boss concerned the municipal elections all over the State; but especially in the metropolis, where the two men fighting in the impeachment trial had fought it out as opposing candidates for mayor. But he did not doubt any more the result of the

election than he doubted the result of the trial. It is traditional that every boss comes to have such confidence in his own skill and power that ultimately he becomes a poor prophet, but this thought never enters the boss's mind until prophecy is turned into history.

Fordyce, on the other hand, still possessed a wholesome belief in the people. He knew that the Boss was wrong in his municipal campaign, just as he was wrong in the trial; and he had had more faith that the people would rebuke the Boss at the polls than that the judges and senators would vindicate the Governor in this court. Fordyce therefore believed that he had been elected mayor of the metropolis; and that the Boss and his dummy candidate, Judge Collins, had been routed. His greater concern therefore was the fate of the Governor and the decisive effect this day's work would have on the woman he loved.

Fordyce at heart believed in Governor Shackleton, but was not a blind worshipper; he did not take a narrow view of political requirements; much latitude should properly be allowed, according to his code. He had been through the experience of men in rough life, and realized how difficult it is sometimes

to observe the golden rule. He often had arguments with people who thought Governor Shackleton willing to benefit by the spoils of politics.

Fordyce, however, rarely permitted himself to become angered at any charges of delinquency against the Governor. He preferred to take refuge in comparison. On one occasion he said that, for the sake of argument, he would admit that the Governor had been careless of his public acts in some of his minor offices before he became Governor; but he denied that the Governor had stooped to anything dishonorable since he had taken the gubernatorial oath. And paint Shackleton black as they would, Fordyce insisted the Governor was so much purer than his accusers that, compared with them, he ought to be canonized and worshipped as a saint.

So, as Fordyce stood there, his mind was really centered on the trial. He forgot his own ambition and threw his soul into his plea.

"If the Court please, counsel for the prosecution has well stated that there is no need to sum up the evidence before this Court, and I share his purpose to co-operate with the well-known wishes of this body, as expressed by your Honor, to conclude these deliberations

to-night. No one is more anxious to bring this travesty to an end than the distinguished defendant.

“There has been enough of scandal, enough of prejudice shown, enough of assassination of character, enough ruthless, selfish perjury—it is high time for the word ‘Amen.’

“What must the citizens of the State think of the dignity of trials, when they have had served up to them in the newspapers—morning, noon and night—such a nauseating lot of alleged testimony, most of which might better be characterized as fishwife gossip and scandal?

“It would, indeed, be a reflection on the intelligence of this high Court of Impeachment for any lawyer to sum up the evidence, and besides it would be a most disagreeable task to one of anything like refined sensibilities.

“This trial—for by such a name it has been dignified—is the result of political strife and jealousy and of the most damnable ambition of the accusers.

“It must be apparent to the judges that the Governor never would have been impeached if he had preferred to take orders rather than to be independent; if he had preferred to help loot the treasury rather than stand guard over

it in the interest of the people; if he had preferred to join the ranks of the grafters rather than run them down and prosecute them.

“There is reasonable ground for belief that at the municipal elections held to-day in different parts of the State the Boss and his system have been routed, and that largely because of the graft methods uncovered and exposed to the light of day by the Governor, and because of the popular belief that the Governor has been prosecuted and persecuted, not for anything wrong, but for his too great insistence upon right.

“Is it too much to assume that if these elections have shown such reversal, to-morrow's dawn would not find a single Assemblyman ready to impeach the Governor, nor a single judge or senator ready to convict him? For such is the philosophy of politics, where the invisible government has been substituted for the real representative government.

“The judgment which you are about to send forth is without appeal so far as any court is concerned; but it will be reviewed, as if by a Court, by the citizens of the State at every fireside, and the Governor will stand acquitted by the people, whether you convict him or acquit him; and likewise each judge sitting here

will be convicted or acquitted by the people according as you may convict or acquit the Governor."

As Fordyce sat down he had scored, at least in the mind of opposing counsel, that particular point about the municipal elections. Judge Collins arose and devoted his short closing to a cynical reference to Mr. Manville's political suggestions. "Your Honor, there is nothing further to state in my summing up argument but I do want to refer to the effort of the brilliant counsel for the defense to insinuate a political influence. He has very adroitly brought to your attention the municipal elections that were held to-day—the reports on which we are liable to hear any moment. Mr. Manville was discreet enough not to allude to the fact that he himself stood as a candidate for mayor to-day in the great metropolis of the State, but can you doubt that he realized that each member of this court had in mind the fact that he was a candidate? I hope that no judge sitting in this case will be influenced to vote in favor of the acquittal of the Governor just because he may think that there is a bare possibility that Mr. Manville, who is the friend and apologist of the Governor, may have been elected mayor of the metropolis to-day."

As Judge Collins sat down the presiding officer seemed to realize that the time was getting short, and that the news of the election might soon be heard. Did he share the belief of Mr. Manville that the Boss and his organization had been smashed? At any rate, for some reason, he plunged squarely into the question. "All members of this court who believe Governor Shackleton guilty under the impeachment charges will say aye."

Nearly all members of the court voted "aye." Just a few negative votes were heard. "The chair hears but few negative votes. It is, therefore, the judgment of this court that Governor Shackleton is——"

Before the presiding officer had finished announcing the vote Ruth Woodstock broke into the court. John Gilmore followed behind, unobserved.

XXII

THE SURPRISE

Ruth and John play trumps. The Boss and Archibald hear their canned-up voices. The Presiding Officer and Governor Shackleton receive telegrams.

Ruth stormed down the aisle hysterically delivering her message. "He's not guilty, and I can prove it." There was great commotion in court. This was a strange scene. The presiding officer brought down his gavel, tap, tap, tap. "There must be order in court."

Ruth was bewildered. She had carried out the plan so far, but her nerve was about to fail her. The presiding officer added to her bewilderment when he pointed his gavel straight at her. "You must be in order, or the bailiff will eject you."

The assurance of Fordyce Manville restored Ruth's equilibrium. He gently indicated a seat near him. Ruth sat down, and Fordyce

took charge. "If the Court will reopen the case, your Honor, I desire to put this lady on the witness stand in behalf of the defense."

Judge Collins intervened. "If the Court please, the vote has been taken and is almost unanimous in the affirmative. This trial is over. Shackleton stands convicted by this Court. He is no longer Governor."

The machinery was working again. The presiding officer felt sure of his ground. "The question has been fairly put and a two-thirds majority have——"

Fordyce was on his feet before the fatal announcement was finished. "Your Honor, under all parliamentary rules any member of this court has a right to change his vote before the vote is announced, and I urge that you hear the testimony of this witness before announcing the vote."

No matter what may have been the actual sentiment, or even the honest opinion of the presiding officer, he recognized the force of the technicality interposed by Fordyce, and while there could be no appeal from this court, force of habit, from long years of practice and on the bench, impelled the presiding officer to rule as if an error could be reviewed. "The point may be well taken, and hearing no objection

by members of this court, the defense may call the witness to the stand."

Fordyce had scored a victory. "Your Honor, I wish to introduce the testimony of Miss Woodstock."

The presiding officer then directed Ruth to take the witness stand and be sworn. After she had placed her hand on the Bible presented by the clerk the presiding officer looked squarely at her and slowly went over the form.

"Do you solemnly swear that the evidence you will give in this case will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?"

"Yes," came softly but firmly from Ruth, and on request of the presiding officer she stated her name and address.

To the first question asked by Fordyce, "Miss Woodstock, do you know Governor Shackleton when you see him?" Ruth answered "Yes, sir." Her countenance lit up; she seemed to take genuine pleasure as she pointed out Governor Shackleton; "there he sits."

"Do you know Mr. Hiram Talley?"

"Yes, sir. There he sits," and with anger she pointed to the Boss.

Judge Collins was on his feet instantly.

"Your Honor, I object. Mr. Talley is not on trial."

The presiding officer was prompt. "Objection sustained. Question and answer will be stricken from the record."

Ruth did not know exactly what this meant, but she did understand Mr. Manville's quick response. "Your Honor, the defendant purposes to prove by this witness that Mr. Talley used undue influence and improper means to secure the impeachment of the Governor."

By this time Ruth felt at ease, and the sight of the Boss and Archibald had kindled anew the fire of hatred which she felt so justly due them from her. In perfect composure, but with suppressed anger, Ruth arose, pointed toward Hiram Talley and Archibald and delivered this unexpected challenge: "Mr. Talley and his son are guilty of bribery."

As confusion started in the court, the presiding officer pounded vigorously on the desk with his gavel. "The witness must be in order," and again pointed the gavel at Ruth, "Be seated and answer questions."

Ruth obeyed in part; that is, she sat down, but her language went on like a torrent: "I have proof in photograph and dictograph records and intercepted telephone conversations."

It was like a contest with the foils, with consummate skill and vast experience on the one side, and nothing but a determination born of outraged conscience on the other side.

Again the gavel tapped the music for the judicial command, "Please keep quiet until questions are asked," and with a flash of anger the presiding officer turned to Fordyce, "Counsel for the defendant must restrain his witness or she will not be permitted to testify."

Mr. Manville knew the limitations of court practice, and he knew the temper of the court, so he admonished Ruth, "Miss Woodstock, you must obey the instructions of the Court," and then proceeded: "I will ask you to explain to the Court what you know about the bribery, or attempted bribery, by Mr. Talley and his son."

Judge Collins did not want this question answered. "Your Honor, I object. We are not trying Mr. Talley or his son for bribery. We are trying the Governor on impeachment."

Fordyce quickly replied, "If the Court please, the defendant's answer to the impeachment recites that the indictment was secured by undue influence, by fraud and bribery. I submit that it is proper, and necessary, to bring into the evidence the name of any person implicated in that fraud or bribery."

The Boss did not know much about law, except what he had learned in the school of experience, but what Fordyce had said impressed him, and for the first time in all his controversies he had permitted his antagonist to get the best of him by making him show his anger. He arose, shook his fist at Ruth and accused her. "That woman is a common woman and a faker."

Fordyce quickly came to Ruth's rescue. "Your Honor, I ask that the witness be protected. If the plaintiff wishes to call Mr. Talley to the witness stand and have him sworn the defense will make no objection, even at this stage of the trial, but I submit that Mr. Talley is entirely out of order."

The presiding officer caught the eye of the Boss and consoled him. "The Court wishes to say that a good deal of latitude has been given in the trial of this case. The Court sitting in this case should be differentiated from the ordinary court; it is properly the purpose of this Court to collect as much evidence as possible, and to sift the facts, without being hampered by the technicalities of the rules of evidence. The Court, I think, will make no objection to a further statement by Mr. Talley."

With great reassurance Judge Collins in-

quired: "Mr. Talley, what were you going to say?"

The Boss replied, with great emphasis: "That woman never wuz in my office but once. That wuz the night uv election. She knows nothin' about me er my affairs."

The Boss had overshot. It was now Ruth's time to show anger. Pointing vigorously at the Boss she cried out hysterically, "You lie! You know very well who I am! I was Archibald's fiancee, only he wasn't man enough to own it any more, after what happened."

The presiding officer's command, "The witness will be in order. Sit down," was not sufficient to allay the commotion in court. Ruth, however, sat down; and when Fordyce arose it was the signal for quiet. "Your Honor, Miss Woodstock is in the witness chair and is under oath. I insist that informal statements by her are more proper under the loose construction of the rules of evidence than informal statements by Mr. Talley, who is not under oath at all."

Again the logic of Fordyce appealed to the judicial sense of the presiding officer. "Mr. Talley will please sit down. The trial will proceed in order."

As the Boss sat down Fordyce proceeded with the examination of the witness. "Miss

Woodstock, state to the Court whether or not you know of any bribery, or attempted bribery, of any Assemblyman to secure the impeachment of Governor Shackleton."

"I do," replied Ruth.

"State to the Court who bribed, or attempted to bribe, any Assemblyman."

"Mr. Hiram Talley."

"State to the Court whom Mr. Talley bribed, or attempted to bribe."

"He bribed Assemblyman Weeks."

"Where?"

"In Mr. Talley's office," answered Ruth, as she looked straight at the Boss.

Fordyce then asked, "How do you know this?"

Ruth had become calm. She took a moving picture film from her portmanteau and said, "Here is a moving-picture film," and then she took wax records from her portmanteau, "and here are dictograph records. They prove it." She rapidly charged on, "And they also prove that Archibald Talley bribed Assemblyman Jones. And here is an intercepted telephone message, which proves that Mr. Talley bribed Assemblyman Smithfield."

Judge Collins interrupted, "Your Honor, the witness is merely making wild statements.

Let counsel adduce her source of knowledge.”

Fordyce began to have confidence in the power of the testimony, even over this Court. “Your Honor, the fondest desire of counsel for plaintiff shall be satisfied,” said Fordyce, as he gave Judge Collins a significant glance.

He then went through the tedious form of presenting the records, film and manuscript to the Court as exhibits.

The judges sat in silent wonderment as Fordyce passed the moving-picture film to Judge Collins for examination and then handed it to the clerk as he said, “Your Honor, I wish to submit this picture film as an exhibit.” The clerk wrote the number and called “Exhibit seventy-two.” Fordyce went on, “If the Court please, I wish to submit these dictograph records as an exhibit.” He went through the form of passing these to Judge Collins for examination, and then handed them to the clerk, who marked them and called out “Exhibit seventy-three.” And again to the Court, “I now wish to submit this typewritten manuscript purporting to be an intercepted telephone conversation, as an exhibit,” passed it to Judge Collins and then to the clerk, who designated it “Exhibit seventy-four.” Fordyce calmly sat at the table. “Miss Woodstock, state to the

Court where you got the manuscript which contains the intercepted telephone conversation."

Ruth hesitated and replied, "I promised not to tell. She is a telephone girl—a friend of mine."

Judge Collins was quick to take advantage of this apparent technical oversight. "Your Honor, this is hearsay evidence, and I move that the manuscript be stricken from the list of exhibits."

Fordyce prayed the Court, "If the Court please, I would ask that ruling on this motion be postponed, and we will either produce first-hand corroborative evidence or I will consent to the withdrawal of the exhibit."

The presiding officer replied, "The Court will pass the question for the time being."

Fordyce resumed the examination. "Miss Woodstock, where did you get the moving-picture film and dictograph records?"

"Mr. Talley's office servant, called Cap, took the pictures and got the dictograph records," said Ruth.

Judge Collins was more than ever aroused. "Your Honor, we are wasting the time of this Court in letting this woman sit here and relate things concerning which she has no personal knowledge. It is a fundamental rule of evi-

dence that only the best evidence is admissible when the best evidence is available. If counsel for the defendant had any faith in this sort of clap-trap testimony, why didn't he have Cap on the witness stand?"

His speech impressed the presiding officer, who admonished Fordyce. "Unless counsel for the defense is of opinion that the witness has first-hand knowledge about the alleged facts he is undertaking to adduce, the witness must be dismissed."

Fordyce realized that the time had come for using the full force of Miss Woodstock's testimony. "Miss Woodstock, had you anything to do personally with the taking of these pictures and the obtaining of these dictograph records? State the whole truth without reservation."

Ruth arose, hysterically, "I taught Mr. Talley's office boy, called Cap, how to use the dictograph and moving-picture camera."

Members of the Court began to confer with one another and great confusion seemed imminent.

Ruth went on: "I helped Cap plant the dictograph and get the moving-pictures in Mr. Talley's office. I did it to prevent injustice to the Governor and his daughter, and for re-

venge! revenge!! revenge!!!” She then dropped in the chair and swooned.

Members of the court left their seats. There was complete disorder.

After persistently rapping with the gavel the presiding officer finally restored a degree of order, and the members slowly resumed their seats.

Ruth rallied and gave eager attention.

Fordyce pressed on with the examination. “How many people were bribed, according to your proof?”

“I am positive of three,” Ruth answered.

“Who bribed them?”

“The Boss bribed two of them and Archibald bribed one,” Ruth said, and as she pointed to the clerk, “The records will prove it.”

Fordyce then, in great seriousness, addressed the Court: “If the Court pleases, the acts of Mr. Talley and his son amount to more than bribery and ocrruption. They have committed a higher crime against the State; they are guilty of treason.”

Consternation seized the entire court.

The Boss nearly collapsed in his seat.

Archibald quaked with fear. He recalled the warning his father had given him on the night before the impeachment. His proud, ego-

tistical spirit sank until he thought himself a mere vagabond.

Fordyce continued: "And I hereby make complaint against Hiram Talley and Archibald Talley and charge them with the crime of treason, and I ask that one of the judges of the court, in his capacity as such, remand them to jail, pending trial."

The presiding officer paused, looking over the court room, as if waiting for somebody else to speak, gazed at Mr. Talley and Archibald, and in low, uncertain voice, asked, "Has Mr. Hiram Talley or Mr. Archibald Talley anything to say?"

The grizzly Boss, like a beast of the forest, realizing that the fatal wound had been inflicted, slowly lifted his big hulk, his head drooping, his countenance woe-begone, and almost inaudibly muttered, "Judge Collins will answer fer us."

Judge Collins arose and, with trepidation, undertook to carry out the latest orders of his Boss. "If the Court please, this motion on the part of the defendant's counsel seems to be a little hasty. We have nothing but this witness' word that these are genuine moving-picture films, and genuine dictograph records, and even granting that they are genuine we have

only this witness' word that they pertain to the conduct of Mr. Talley and his son, and that they relate in any way to this impeachment case."

As Judge Collins sat down the Boss grasped at the straw of hope floated out to him by the reassuring words of his judicial henchman. There was not the old-time fire in his speech; rather, it was like the last snarl of the animal surely at bay, but it was said in anger. "I'll tell ye why he didn't have Cap here. This is all a lie. I know Cap did git dictograph records and moving-picture films, but he ain't got 'em now because we caught him and destroyed them records."

John, who thus far had not been observed, or had not been recognized, quickly crossed to Ruth, put his hand gently on her shoulder, and with chivalrous pride came to her rescue. "It's every word true. I swear it. The records and films the Boss got from me were dummies we fixed up on purpose. These are genuine."

The Boss sat down.

Fordyce then requested the privilege of putting John Gilmore on the witness stand.

Miss Woodstock was excused, and John took the witness chair and was sworn. The

presiding officer asked him to state his name. He replied promptly, "John Gilmore. The Boss called me 'Cap.'"

Fordyce proceeded with the examination. "Mr. Gilmore, did you come in to this room with Miss Woodstock?"

John replied, "I did."

"Have you heard all of her testimony on the witness stand?" Fordyce asked.

"I have heard every word of it," said John.

"Do you know that what she has said is true?"

"I do," said John, emphatically.

Fordyce quietly said, "That's all."

As Fordyce concluded Judge Collins seemed dazed. There was utter silence.

The presiding officer looked at Judge Collins with mute inquiry as to whether he wished to cross-examine the witness. Judge Collins was so nonplussed that he could not decide promptly; but after an ominous pause he chose not to risk making a bad matter worse, and waving the witness aside with a slow gesture, said, "That's all."

Everybody was waiting for somebody else to do something or say something.

The presiding officer broke the silence. "Is there any one in court with sufficient knowl-

edge to tell the Court how long it would take to prepare these films and dictograph records for an exhibit?"

Fordyce answered, "If the Court please, Miss Woodstock is an expert on moving-pictures and dictographs," and turning to Ruth: "Miss Woodstock, how long would it take to get a moving-picture exhibit and the dictograph records ready?"

Ruth replied with the air of authority, "It would take some time if you want the moving-pictures shown on a screen and the dictograph records synchronized with them—I mean the talking pictures."

"Is there not a quicker and simpler way?" asked Fordyce.

X Ruth took from her portmanteau a magnifying glass and said, "A man is outside with a recording dictograph. The dictograph records are ready to put on." in the moving-picture film."

As Ruth made this statement she handed her magnifying glass to the clerk, who passed it to the presiding officer. The clerk then handed up the film.

Ruth pointed to the door and continued, "A man is outside with a recording dictograph. The dictograph records are ready to put on." She indicated the records on the clerk's table.

"This is Turner's new invention, and faithfully records the voice. May I have it brought in?" She started to rise.

The presiding officer halted her with a gesture and said, "I'll send for it," and he sent a policeman for the machine.

The presiding officer then looked at the film through the magnifying glass and seemed startled with surprise. He then calmly addressed the other judges. "It might be impracticable for all of us to examine these films. For convenience, and if I hear no objection, I will appoint Judges Lockwood and Frankel and Senators Marsh, Wortheim and Casey as a committee to look them over with me."

He paused, "There being no objection, it is so ordered."

The judges appointed on the committee arose and filed up to the presiding officer's desk and started to examine the film through the glass.

The policeman came in with the recording dictograph, placed it on the presiding officer's desk.

The presiding officer, with more respect than he had at any time shown Ruth, said to her, "Will Miss Woodstock operate the machine?"

And as Ruth replied, "Yes, Judge," she arose from a seat she had taken beside For-dyce, crossed to the presiding officer's desk, inserted the record and started the machine which was to give the Boss and Archibald a rehearsal of their own criminal words in bribing Assemblymen Weeks and Jones in the Boss's sumptuous quarters, while his lieutenants and hirelings were carousing in the banquet hall one month before.

The dictograph pealed forth with merciless accuracy the words and intonations of the Boss. "See here, Weeks. To show you that I'm a sport—you promise me that you'll vote in favor uv impeachment, and do what ye can to git the others to do it, an' I'll help you git 'lected again, and here's a thousand dollars toward it right now. You know money makes the horse stand hitched. Ha! ha! ha! Good joke, eh?"

And then came a reproduction of a part of Assemblyman Weeks's reply, which the Boss and Archibald recognized and remembered. "You're all right, Boss. You can count on me. I'll catch an early train in the morning for the Capitol. And I'll stand hitched, too."

Next the Boss was reminded by his own voice of his boasting to Archibald, "Archibald,

if ye learn the game right, the sky's the limit. When Jones comes in, you try your hand on him, but don't go above a thousand unless I give ye the wink."

Archibald's voice was then heard, "Assemblyman, my father and I are very anxious to have the Governor impeached. We think we've got 'nough votes for it; but we'd like to have yours; and, besides, we want you in on it. You're goin' to be a big man some day."

And the reply by Assemblyman Jones held no humor for the Boss nor Archibald, "Waal, do you know, I don't believe he's guilty, by Heck!"

Archibald then listened to his offer of a bribe. "We'll take care uv you at the next 'lection, and make you a present uv a thousand dollars now. That's the very limit." And after a short pause, "Is it a go?"

The Court then heard the voice of Assemblyman Jones as the bargain was sealed. "I'm with you to the finish. I'll hurry right back to the Capitol."

A spell centered over the court room. Each member seemed too full of thought for utterance.

The spell was broken by the appearance of

a messenger boy with two telegrams, one of which he delivered to the presiding officer and the other to Governor Shackleton.

The presiding officer read his telegram, passed it to Judge Lockwood, who held it where all the members of the committee could read it. The presiding officer, in slow, measured tone, inquired: "What is the opinion of the committee as to the genuineness of this testimony?"

Judge Lockwood replied, "The committee are unanimous in the belief that the records are genuine."

The committee then filed back to their seats, Judge Lockwood carrying with him the telegram, which was passed from judge to judge, all reading it with marked interest.

As Governor Shackleton read his telegram he gave a faint smile, the first smile in four months.

XXIII

THE VINDICATION

Tables turned on the Boss.

The fight was over, the Governor had been tried; his fate rested in the hands of the senators and judges who surrounded him. He had heard the almost unanimous vote against him. He had believed that vote unjust—contrary to law and the evidence. He had then heard, with astonishment, the evidence given by Ruth and John after the case was reopened.

Fordyce had played the surprise with masterful accuracy. For some reason he had not thought it best to tell the Governor anything about it. Only Fordyce himself, Ruth and John knew all about it.

Fordyce had told Edith a part, but not all. He would like to have told her all, but his judgment forbade. Was he afraid of her discretion? Perhaps not precisely, but he undoubtedly realized that it would take more

than human discretion to outweigh Edith's enthusiasm if she learned of, and had faith in, the efficacy of such testimony. There was perhaps another reason why he did not tell her, which was likely the only reason he did not tell the Governor himself, and that was the fear on his part that the scheme might not work, that there might be some slip that would prevent the consummation of it; and, above all, because of the persistent doubt in his mind as to whether that particular court would be influenced by the evidence even if he got it through according to plans and specifications.

The Governor entertained the same sort of doubt. If he had known of this plan in advance he would have said, "It's no use. My conviction is fore-ordained by the Boss and his obedient servants," for that's the way the Governor felt about it.

So, even after he heard and saw the startling drama which Fordyce had staged and directed, and which Ruth and John had enacted, the Governor's hope was not built up as far as he was concerned. That was not why he smiled on reading the telegram. He smiled because the contents of the telegram meant victory for some one else.

The presiding officer, with the characteristic

calm that follows a storm, addressed the court. "The members of the Court have heard the testimony of this witness and the report of the special committee. Has any member of this Court any comments to make?"

Judge Lockwood was the first to respond. With suppressed excitement he arose. "Your Honor, I change my vote. I vote not guilty."

Then another judge arose. "Your Honor, I change my vote."

Simultaneously nearly all the judges arose and made a similar demand. The excitement had held itself in as long as possible. It was useless to call for further formalities; it was all the presiding officer could do to make himself heard in the final necessary question, "All in favor of acquitting Governor Shackleton say 'Aye,'"

The vigor with which the members responded "aye" would have done honor to a mass meeting or a political convention.

Without waiting a moment longer the presiding officer closed the case with a solemn declaration, "Governor Shackleton is discharged from the custody of this Court."

The Boss and Archibald showed by their statue-like stillness and silence that they realized the gravity of the situation; they knew

that Governor Shackleton's acquittal meant with greater emphasis their everlasting downfall, and Judge Collins looked the same part.

Members of the Court closed in on Governor Shackleton and deluged him with congratulations. The Governor, with a halo of happiness and gratitude, waved aloft the telegram which he held in his hand. This was the signal for comparative quiet, and the Governor spoke: "Gentlemen, I thank you. You have found me innocent. Fordyce Manville has been elected Mayor of the metropolis by an overwhelming majority."

Fordyce had been the first to congratulate the Governor, and then quickly turned to Edith to claim her pledge to be his wife if her father should be vindicated. They were standing in each other's embrace when the Governor put one hand upon Fordyce's head and the other upon Edith's:

"Fordyce, you have proved a true friend, and I give you the greatest treasure I have on earth, my daughter, who is the Governor's only Boss."

The Governor then faced his auditors once more, and with more sadness than gloating declared, "The stigma of my trial still remains, but time, the adjuster of all things, will prove

to you, to all of you, that I have been true to my oath of office, and true to the people. I thank you! God bless you!"

THE END.













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